JOHN KAGI AND JOHN BROWN

JOHN W. WAYLAND

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By

JOHN W. WAYLAND

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STRASBURG, VIRGINIA
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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Introduction	1
II.	The Kagey Family in Virginia	7
III.	Abram Afoot	11
IV.	John's Youth in Ohio	14
V.	Two Months in Virginia	19
VI.	Abram in California	25
VII.	Politics and Phonography	29
VIII.	John and Mary in Virginia	34
IX.	The Family in Nebraska	43
X.	John Kagi in Kansas	51
XI.	Encounter with Judge Elmore	59
XII.	In and Out of Kansas	65
XIII.	The Convention in Canada	71
XIV.	Final Operations in Kansas	76
XV.	In Northern Ohio Again	87
XVI.	In Chambersburg	93
XVII.	At Harper's Ferry	103
XVIII.	Kagi's Kin in Later Years	115
XIX.	Conclusion	127
Index		129

PICTURES

Locust Vale, Old Kagey Homestead	6
Home of Jacob Kagey and Son Abram J.	20
Birthplace of John Henri Kagi	24
Kagey Monument in Bristolville, Ohio	32
Methodist Church in Bristolville	36

PAGE

John Henri Kagi's Penmanship ____ 40
Mayhew-Kagey Cabin at Nebraska City ____ 49
John Henri Kagi and Lady Friend ____ 61
Franklin Keagy, Family Historian ____ 83
Harper's Ferry about 1859 ____ 86
Harper's Ferry about 1900 ____ 90
Rittner Home in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania ____ 94
Kennedy Farm House from the Southwest ____ 98
Kennedy Farm House from the Northwest ____ 102
Engine House ("John Brown's Fort") on its Original Site 108
The Same, on the Campus of Storer College ____ 112
Abraham Neff Kagey, Father of John Henri ____ 117
John O. Davis, Brother-in-law of John Henri Kagi ____ 121

MAPS

Kagey Homes in Virginia ____ 2
Trumbull County, Ohio, and Environs ____ 16
Region Around Nebraska City ____ 44
Kansas Theater of Kagi and Brown ____ 56
Canada Theater of Kagi and Brown ____ 72
Harper's Ferry and Environs ____ 106
Harper's Ferry in Detail ____ 126

CHAPTER I

Introduction

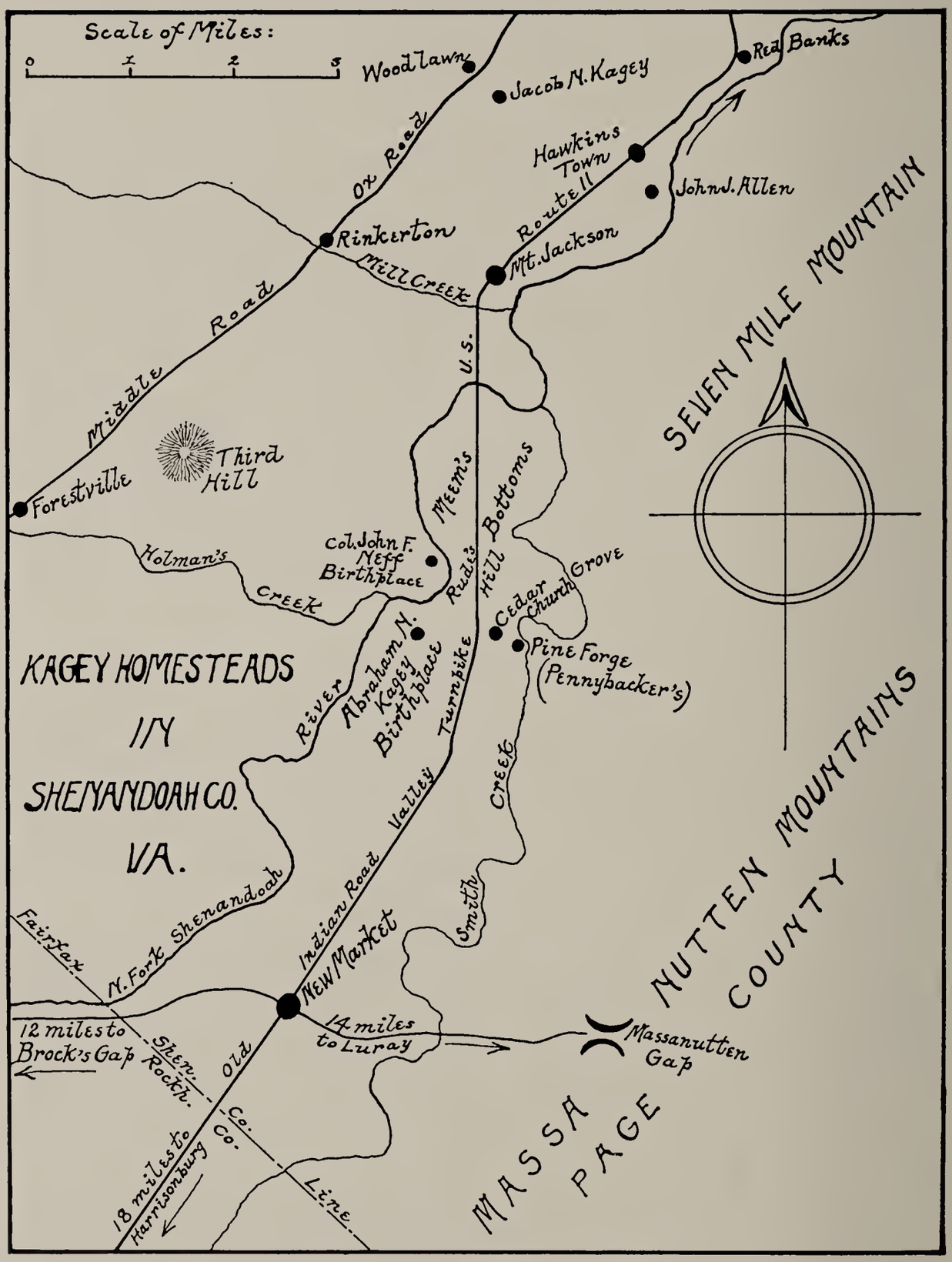
Because of the far-reaching influence of John Brown and his men on the course of American history it is probable that facts concerning them will continue to be regarded with interest; and inasmuch as I have in hand a number of intimate items concerning John Henri Kagi, Brown's "Secretary of War," that are not generally available to the public, I feel constrained to present them in this chronicle. This disposition is encouraged by the reception that was given years ago to a brief account of Kagi entitled "One of John Brown's Men," which I wrote and which was printed in the *Pennsylvania-German* of October, 1909, a monthly magazine published at Lititz, Pennsylvania.

In October 1942 considerable portions of this work appeared, under the caption, "John Henri Kagi, John Brown's Secretary of War," in AMERICANA, issued by The American Historical Publishing Company, Inc., of Somerville, New Jersey and New York City. By the courtesy of the said Company those portions that appeared in AMERICANA are incorporated in the following narrative.

My purpose is to give information, not to adduce arguments or set forth opinions. Most of the facts that I shall present relate to my own near kin—John Henri Kagi was a first-cousin to my mother. Accordingly, I shall proceed directly and informally, speaking often in the first person, without apology.

Different members of the Kagi family spelled the name in different ways, as will appear in the narrative.

Abraham Neff Kagey, John Henri's father, was born on the ancestral homestead near Rude's Hill, in Shenandoah County, Virginia, on July 20, 1807. At the age of 22 he went to Trumbull County, Ohio, where he married and where


Scale of Miles:
0 1 2 3
Woodlawn
Jacob M. Kagey
Red Banks
Ox Road
Hawkins Town
Route 11
John J. Allen
Rinkerton
Mt. Jackson
Mill Creek
Middle Road
U. S.
SEVEN MILE MOUNTAIN
Third Hill
Forestville
Meem's
Bottoms
Holman's Creek
Col. John F. Neff Birthplace
Rude's Hill
Cedar Grove Church
Pine Forge (Pennybacker's)
Abraham N. Kagey Birthplace
River
Turnpike
KAGEY HOMESTEADS
IN
SHENANDOAH CO.
VA.
Valley
Creek
Smith
Indian Road
Fairfax
N. Fork Shenandoah
New Market
14 miles to Luray
Massanutten Gap
NUTTEN MOUNTAINS
COUNTY
12 miles to Brock's Gap
Shen. Rock.
Old
Co.
Co.
Line
18 miles to Harrisonburg
MASSA
PAGE

his three children, Barbara, John, and Mary, were born. In 1852 he and John came to Virginia, where he spent a short time with his brothers and other kinsfolk in Shenandoah County before going to the gold fields of California. John remained in Virginia two or three months at that time before returning to Ohio.

On June 6, 1854, John came again to Virginia, where he remained, most of the time, for the next ten months. On October 14, 1854, Mary, his sister, joined him among their relatives in Virginia and remained there until August 12, 1856, when she returned to Ohio with her father, who had reached Shenandoah County from California on July 2, preceding. John had left Virginia on March 26, 1855, for Nebraska City, where his sister Barbara and her first husband, Allen B. Mayhew, were living.

For most of the time while John and Mary were in Virginia they made their home at the farm house of their uncle, my grandfather, Jacob Kagey, at Woodlawn, two and a half miles north of Mt. Jackson. Jacob was a year and a half older than his brother Abraham, John's father. My mother Anna, oldest child of Jacob Kagey and four years older than her cousin John, kept a daily journal from 1850 until her death in 1901. In this she entered a record of the comings and goings of her kinsfolk and friends, and noted when she received letters from them; also when she wrote to them. This journal (diary) is in my possession. I have also a long letter written to her from California by her uncle Abe in 1853, and two letters that he wrote to her many years later from his home in Nebraska; also a letter from Barbara to my mother from Ohio before Barbara's first marriage. I have also a remarkable specimen of fancy penmanship from John's hand, executed for my mother and given to her while John was at her father's home in Virginia.

In September, 1881, my parents and I spent 13 days with Uncle Abe and his daughter Barbara, then the Widow Bradway, at their home on Camp Creek in Otoe County, Nebraska,

10 miles south of Nebraska City; and in the spring and summer of 1884 Uncle Abe spent five months visiting us and other relatives in Shenandoah County, Virginia.

I often heard my father and mother speak of John Henri Kagi and other members of his family, and I also obtained information concerning him from my mother's younger brother, Joel F. Kagey, and from one or two other relatives who knew John when he was in Virginia in 1852 and 1854-55. It was my privilege, also, to know Franklin Keagy, the family historian, who boarded at the same place in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, with John Kagi and others of John Brown's men shortly preceding the raid at Harper's Ferry. John at that time hid his identity under an assumed name, and Franklin was not in his secret, but saw him frequently and was afforded various opportunities of gauging his qualities. Franklin's 675-page book on the Kägy Relationship, published at Harrisburg in 1899, contains an extended sketch of John Henri.

Some years ago I received from Dr. James L. Avis of Harrisonburg, Virginia, many interesting details of the Harper's Ferry raid. Dr. Avis's father, John Avis, of Charles Town, Jefferson County, now West Virginia, was one of the men who led the attack on the raiders. He was also a deputy sheriff of Jefferson County and the jailer at Charles Town who had John Brown and other prisoners in charge. Dr. Avis himself was a boy of fourteen at the time of the raid and later became well acquainted with Brown while the latter was in jail.

In April, 1932, in company with Dr. Henry T. McDonald of Harper's Ferry, I visited the Kennedy Farm from which Brown, Kagi and their associates operated, and while there made photographs which are reproduced in this work. I have been familiar with Harper's Ferry and its environs for years and have carefully identified the various localities connected with the raid.

Some years ago Miss Helen M. McFarland, Librarian, favored me with copies of articles concerning John Henri Kagi

in files of the *Kansas Tribune,* Topeka, in the library of the Kansas State Historical Society, and recently, upon my two visits to Topeka, Miss Louise Barry, Curator of Manuscripts, gave me access to a collection of Kagi's letters in the archives of the Society and later supplied me with copies of other related documents. Mr. Kirke Mechem, Secretary of the Society, also has extended to me favors which I gratefully acknowledge.

A letter written to me shortly before his death (in October, 1941) by Hon. Charles L. Kagey of Wichita, Kansas, gives interesting information concerning Kagi's father, sisters, and other relatives in Nebraska and Kansas.

I recite these particulars to indicate my opportunities for securing intimate details about John Henri Kagi, the subject of this narrative.

Nearly all of the relationship in Virginia spell the family name Kagey. This spelling, as well as Kagy and Cagey, is apt to mislead the pronunciation of strangers, inasmuch as the *g* in all spellings has the hard sound, as in *keg*. Kaga and Kagi, therefore, seem to be the spellings most consistent with the pronunciation; and Kagi appears to have been the original form.

Locust Vale, old Kagey Home in Shenandoah County, Va. Here Abraham Neff Kagey was born in 1807; here his son, John Henri Kagi, visited at different times between 1851 and 1856. Two brothers of Abraham Neff Kagey, Henry and David, lived here for many years; later it was the home of Henry's son, John Henry Kagey. Here in 1876 was born Charles L. Kagey of Kansas, son of John Henry, who was minister to Finland under President Harding. The photograph is from a painting made by a member of the family about 1880. The trees shown in the left rear are willows along the Shenandoah River. The location is four miles northeast of New Market, just west of Rude's hill. The old buildings were removed about 1885 by John Henry Kagey, who erected a brick dwelling on the same site.

CHAPTER II

The Kagey Family in Virginia

John Henri Kagi, on his father's side, was descended from a long line of Kagis and Neffs in Shenandoah County, Virginia. Both these families, which first located in Pennsylvania, were from Switzerland, where they are still numerous. The first Kagi in Virginia was Henry; the first Neff, so far as known, was Dr. John Henry.

Henry Kagi (Kagey), born in 1728 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, fourth son of John R., married Barbara Stoner and came to what is now Page County, Virginia, in 1768. The next year he moved a few miles westward across the Massanutten Mountain and located on Smith Creek, three miles northeast of the present town of New Market, in Shenandoah County. Here he purchased 404 acres of good land and built a mill near his dwelling. Parts of the foundation of this mill still remain, with traces of the mill race.

Nineteen years earlier (1750) Dr. John Henry Neff had taken up 470 acres of land on Rude's Hill (as it was later named), on the north fork of the Shenandoah River, a mile or two north from the Henry Kagi place on Smith Creek. In 1756, Dr. Neff received a grant for a second tract of land, 404 acres, adjoining the one he had taken up in 1750. Parts of this land are still in the hands of his descendants.

Abraham Kagi (Kagey), fourth son of Henry on Smith Creek, born in Pennsylvania in 1764, married Anna Neff, a granddaughter of Dr. John Henry. She was a daughter of Dr. Jacob Neff and was born in Shenandoah County, Virginia, December 8, 1772. There is a tradition in the family that there has always been a Doctor Neff. It has been true, at least until very recently. For many years Dr. John Henry Neff, a direct descendant of the pioneer of the same name at Rude's Hill, was a leading physician of Harrisonburg, Virginia.

His son, the late Dr. John Henry Neff of Charlottesville, was a distinguished member of the staff of the University of Virginia hospital.

Abraham Kagi and his wife Anna Neff lived on her father's home place, since known as Locust Vale, just off Rude's Hill on the west, the land being part of the grant made to Dr. John Henry Neff in 1750. At Locust Vale, July 20, 1807, was born Abraham Neff Kagey, third son of Abraham and his wife Anna. Abraham Neff Kagey, now known in our family as "California Abe," was the father of John Henri Kagi.

After Abraham Neff Kagey went to Ohio in 1829, his brothers, Henry and David, lived at Locust Vale in two old houses that stood within a few yards of each other. In or about 1853 David sold out to his brother Henry (Henry Neff Kagey) and moved 28 miles southwest to Bridgewater, in Rockingham County, Virginia, where his large family of children grew up. Henry remained at Locust Vale until his death, May 25, 1879. He and many other relatives are buried in the old Neff-Kagey graveyard near Locust Vale, and only a short distance from the site of a fort that was built in the river bottom for defense against the Indians. From Henry, Locust Vale descended to his son, John Henry Kagey, who was the father of the late Judge Charles L. Kagey of Kansas, U. S. Minister to Finland under President Harding.

My grandfather, Jacob Kagey, born at Locust Vale, February 6, 1806, second son of Abraham and his wife Anna Neff, was a year and a half younger than his brother Henry Neff, and a year and a half older than his brother Abraham Neff (California Abe). He, February 21, 1826, married Barbara Neff, daughter of John Neff (1776-1852), who was a son of Francis, one of the five sons of Dr. John Henry Neff, who took up land at Rude's Hill in 1750 and 1756.

My grandmother, Barbara Neff Kagey, born January 24, 1805, was the eldest child of a large family. Her brother, John Neff (1809-1875), lived on part of the ancestral lands

near Rude's Hill and was the father of John Francis Neff (1834-1862), who was colonel of the 33d Virginia Infantry, Stonewall Brigade. Colonel Neff was with General Jackson on the famous flank march preceding the second battle of Manassas, and was killed the evening of August 28, 1862, in the first hard clash of that long engagement. His younger brother, Benjamin W. Neff, was an esteemed Tunker preacher, dying only a few years ago at the old home near Rude's Hill. Elder Benjamin Neff, in 1924, pointed out to me the site of the old Indian fort near Locust Vale.

My mother, Anna Kagey, older daughter of Jacob and his wife Barbara Neff, was a chronicler of the Virginia Kageys. She gave much assistance to Franklin Keagy of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in compiling the family history; and it is by means of her diary that I have been enabled to ascertain many facts and dates relating to her cousin, John Henri Kagi, his father, and his sisters.

Abraham Neff Kagey ("California Abe") was always oppressed by too much civilization. At the age of 22 he walked to Ohio. In 1852 he sailed around Cape Horn to California, where he remained between three and four years. In 1856 he moved to Nebraska and took up land on Camp Creek, while Indians, wolves, and wildcats were plentiful in the vicinity. In 1885, at the age of 78, he took up a homestead on the Kansas prairie, where he died seven years later.

Abe's brother Henry, who remained at Locust Vale, was in his youth a successful hunter and trapper. In the county records at Woodstock one may see that he, with others, was paid at the rate of ten dollars apiece for old wolf scalps. I heard my mother say that one time when he found a bear in one of his traps he became so much excited that he jumped astride the animal and beat him on the head with his fists for a while before he realized that he could not kill him that way.

In the Kagi family, as well as among the Neffs and many others, certain Christian names, such a John, Jacob, Henry, Abraham, Isaac, Barbara, Anna, and Elizabeth, were used re-

peatedly from generation to generation. What genealogist has not realized the unwisdom of such a practice? To avoid confusion here and farther on we may at once distinguish between (or among) three John Kageys, first cousins: John Henri, son of California Abe; John Henry, son of Henry, Abe's older brother; and John William, one of the sons of David, who lived for some years at Locust Vale and then moved to Bridgewater. My grandfather, Jacob Kagey, named his first son John, but he died in infancy or early childhood.

CHAPTER III

Abram Afoot

Some years ago Isaac Benjamin Kagey of Augusta County, Virginia, one of the sons of David, told me how his uncle, California Abe Kagey, John Henri's father, made his journey to Ohio in 1829. Isaac Benjamin, born at Locust Vale, Shenandoah County, Virginia, March 9, 1846, was the sixth son of David Neff Kagey and his wife Mary Miller.

By 1829, Uncle Abe, then 22 years old, had probably already learned his trade as a blacksmith and was no doubt stirred by youthful ambition and that wanderlust that was still strong in him at fourscore. He decided to go west—northwest, to be more exact. Trumbull County, Ohio, a locality far up in the northeast corner of the new state, not far from Lake Erie, was the place towards which his eager eyes and tireless footsteps were directed. What reasons induced him to select that particular region rather than another can only be conjectured, but it is probable that kinsmen and other Virginians of his acquaintance who had already settled there had given him information that influenced his choice. It is certain that Virginians in considerable numbers moved to various counties of Ohio at early dates.

Uncle Abe's birthplace and early home, as we have already noted, was just west of Rude's Hill, Shenandoah County, Virginia, at the old Neff-Kagey homestead later called Locust Vale. It is in the edge of the river bottom, about a quarter of a mile southeast from the river (north fork of the Shenandoah), which flows from southwest to northeast. The old Indian Road, now U. S. Highway No. 11, known best locally as the Valley Pike, follows here the same general course as the river. It passes over Rude's Hill at a distance of half a mile southeast from Locust Vale. In other words, Locust Vale is between the pike on the southeast and the river on the northwest, somewhat nearer the river, but not far from either.

The pike, as one travels southwest from Winchester, passes through Strasburg, Woodstock, the county-seat of Shenandoah County, Edinburg, Hawkinstown, and Mt. Jackson; crosses the river a mile southwest of Mt. Jackson; then runs a straight course for a mile and a half through a level, fertile plain of a thousand acres, between the river and Smith Creek, known as Meem's Bottom, and mounts Rude's Hill along the eastern edge of the land that was granted to Dr. John Henry Neff in 1750 and 1756. Three miles southwest from Rude's Hill and the Neff lands the pike runs through New Market, formerly Cross Roads, the place where John Sevier, later "Nollichucky Jack" of Tennessee, set up in business for himself in 1765, at the early age of 20. On the pike, 18 miles southwest from New Market, is Harrisonburg; twenty-four miles farther on in the same direction is Staunton; and midway between Harrisonburg and Staunton is the village of Burketown. In 1829 the valley road had not yet been made a turnpike, but it was a stage road and for more than a half-century had been an important highway for wagons as well as for travelers on horseback and afoot.

I present this geographical outline in order that the reader more easily may follow the story of Uncle Abe's journey to Ohio in 1829, as I received it from Cousin Isaac Benjamin Kagey, Abe's nephew.

When Uncle Abe was preparing to start for Ohio he learned of a man at Burketown who was going to move to Trumbull County with a wagon. Uncle Abe got in touch with him and arranged to have him take his (Abe's) trunk on the wagon. Uncle Abe was to go along, riding on the wagon where the road was level or down-hill, walking up hills, and pushing behind the wagon where the going was very difficult.

But in Harrisonburg a man was to be hanged, and Uncle Abe had to see that hanging before he could go to Ohio. Accordingly, he went up to Harrisonburg, 21 or 22 miles from his home at Locust Vale, and saw the man hanged. In the meantime the man from Burketown, with his wagon, had gone

on his way down the valley road, picking up Uncle Abe's trunk as he passed Rude's Hill. Probably he spent the first night on his journey at Locust Vale.

By the time Uncle Abe got back home from the hanging, the man with the wagon was a day's journey down the road towards Winchester. The distance from Rude's Hill to Winchester, northeast, is about 50 miles, or somewhat less. From Winchester northwest to Cumberland, Maryland, on the great National Road to Wheeling and Ohio, is about the same distance (50 miles), or somewhat farther. Rude's Hill, Winchester, and Cumberland form the points, roughly, of a right-triangle. Uncle Abe may not have been an expert in mathematics, but he knew that the hypotenuse of a right triangle is a shorter distance than the sum of the other two sides; accordingly, he did not follow the man with the wagon down the road towards Winchester, but started walking directly northward through the mountains to intercept him at Cumberland or some point not far west of Cumberland.

On the National Road at Cumberland and westward from there many wagons were coming and going; so, when Uncle Abe reached the great highway and made inquiry, he could not be certain whether his friend with the wagon had passed or not. He walked on, expecting to overtake him or be overtaken by him. In due time he reached Wheeling, on the Ohio River. There he turned northward towards Trumbull County, Ohio, which is about 75 miles north of Wheeling. He kept on walking and finally reached Trumbull County ahead of the man with the wagon.

CHAPTER IV

John's Youth in Ohio

On April 15, 1832, after Abraham Neff Kagey had been in Trumbull County, Ohio, about three years, he there married Anna Fansler, whose parents and grandparents were natives of Virginia—probably of Shenandoah County, where the family is still represented. To this marriage were born four children: Barbara Ann, 1833; John Henry, March 15, 1835; Mary E., 1837; and a fourth child that died in infancy. The family home was in Bristolville, a village 11 miles north of Warren, the county-seat. The mother died March 30, 1838.

The earliest writing I have that gives information about John, Abraham's son, and other members of the family is a letter written December 7, 1848, to my mother, then Anna Kagey, by John's older sister, Barbara Ann. This letter follows:

Bristol Dec. 7th 1848

My Dear cousin Anna

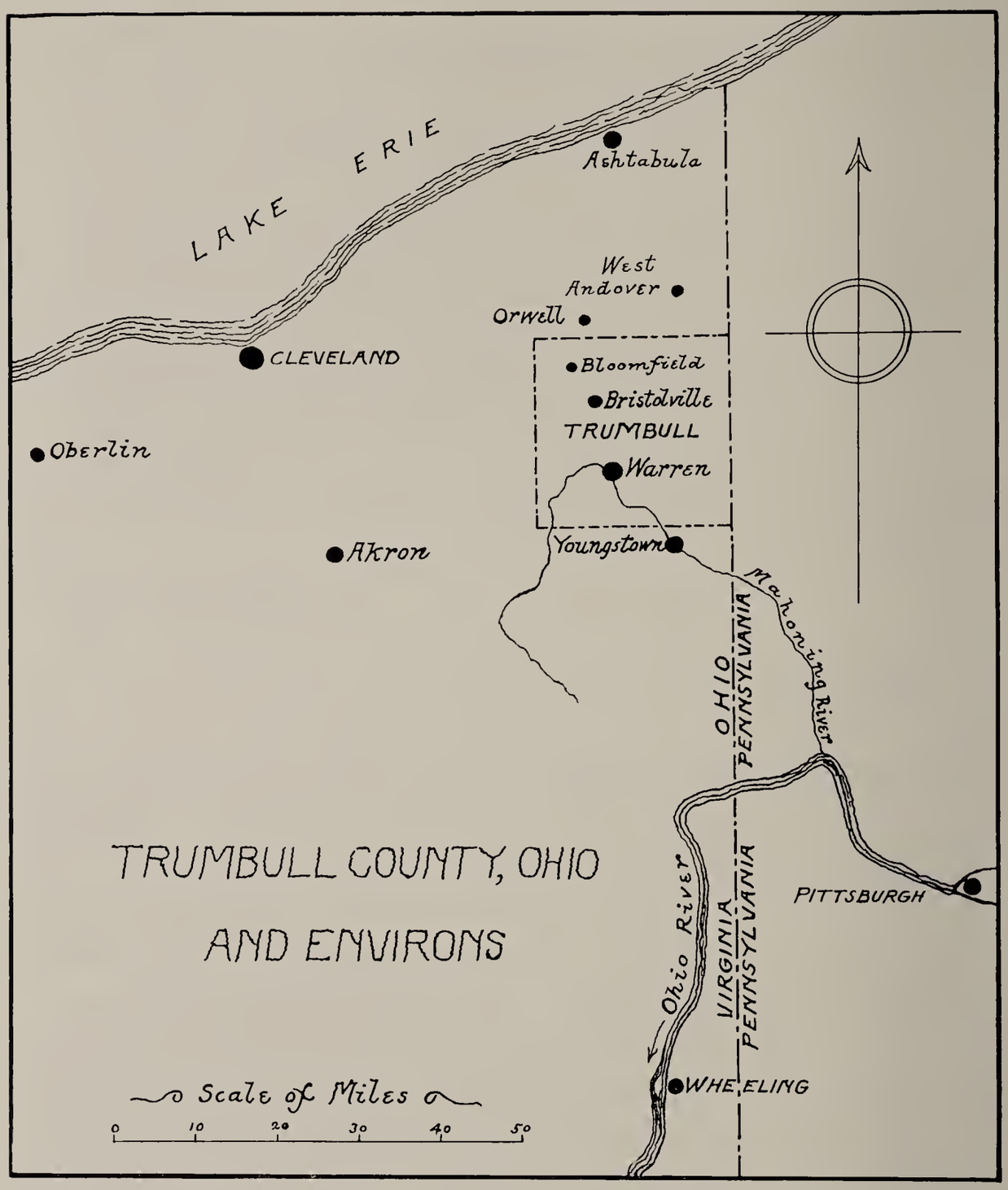
I take my pen in hand to answer your letter of the 15th of November. I received it the 29th. We were very glad to hear from you also from the rest of Our friends; we have not heard from them in a long time—Tell them to write to us. If there was any of them dead I dont know as they would write. It is not much satisfaction for me to write to any one that I have never seen. If I was well acquainted with you I could think of enough to fill a sheet. But as I have never seen you I have nothing of any importance to write. If you had ever lived here I could write about the folks here but you dont know any of them here. I wanted to write a few lines and have Pa fill it up but he did not seem to care much about it so I must write as much as I can. We have not had much snow yet here. in Orwel 10 miles north of here the snow has been nearly a foot deep. At the Lake it has been 27 inches deep a couple weeks ago. It is very muddy here now; it is very bad traveling now with any team. I should like to come down there where you live but I dont know as I ever shall. You must try to come out here you can come here better than I can go there. I

have all the work to see to and you have not. John goes to school now and so does Mary. Pa wanted me too go this winter but I cannot and do the work too; perhaps I shall go next winter if I live and let Mary stay at home. It is pretty healthy here now there has been but few deaths. Butter is one shilling a pound. I dont know what wheat is worth or corn either. Beef is from 2½ to five cents a pound, pork 4 cents, Lard 7. Potatoes rot in some places; ours did not rot much this year to what they did last; they dont rot any in the cellar. It is about time to bring my letter to a close; you must not forget to write; do not wait long; write often for postage is cheap as it will be; if Old Zac is President may be postage will be high to support his niggers or take them to Texas. Give my [love] to your Father and mother and tell them that we should like to see them here; give my love to your brothers and sister and to all inquiring friends; so no more at present But remaining your affectionate cousin

Barbara A. Kagy
Bristolville Ohio

Anna M. Kagy
Shenandoah Va.

Barbara was about fifteen years old at this writing; John was fourteen, lacking three months; and Mary was about eleven. Anna, Jacob's daughter, to whom the letter was written, was between seventeen and eighteen. Anna was a great letter-writer—continued to be so all her life—and evidently had first written to Barbara. The latter, though hard put to it, as she confesses and demonstrates, set herself to the task of replying with a rather grim sense of duty, and she managed to fill a page and a half of the blue-tinted folded sheet of letter paper, each of the four pages of which is in size 8 by 10½ inches. Her frankness was a family trait—the same blunt directness appears in letters written by her father, and other Kageys and Neffs. Her keen interest in politics and her antipathy to Negro slavery are evident. In her view of the situation, which was no doubt the one prevalent in her community, President-elect Taylor was largely responsible for the extensive additions of territory recently made in the Southwest (possible slave country), and supposedly had exerted himself in that respect with personal interests in mind.



It must be remembered that Trumbull County and adjoining parts of Ohio lay in the famous Connecticut Reserve and had been settled largely by families from the "Land of Steady Habits," whose opposition to slavery was of an earnest and outright kind. Accordingly, one need not be surprised that Barbara, responding to the influences of her environment, had already decided convictions against the traffic in Negroes;

neither is it surprising that her brother John grew up with like convictions.

John and Mary were going to school. We cannot help wishing that Barbara had told something about the school they were attending, or the teachers in charge. It might have been just as interesting to Anna as the particulars about muddy roads and the price of lard, and it certainly would be appreciated by present readers who are trying to get an intimate picture of the conditions under which John grew up.

Evidence seems to be abundant enough that John was a precocious youth. The fact that he, at the age of 19 (as we shall see later), was teaching algebra, geometry, natural philosophy, chemistry, botany, and astronomy, as well as phonography and other subjects more familiar, is convincing enough; besides, there are family traditions to the same effect. Franklin Keagy, the family historian, says:

"His early education was such as the common schools in his neighborhood at that early day afforded. He was quick at learning and possessed a retentive memory. He was quiet and studious, and of good moral character and highly respected by all who knew him. His natural talents were seen and appreciated by his schoolmates. Whenever an exhibition was planned by the scholars he was always assigned the most difficult task." [1]

However, Franklin's statement, in his next sentence, that John "was in a great measure self-taught," is, I believe, open to question. We can be pretty certain that the Trumbull County schools of 1840-50 were well taught and well attended. John and Mary were both going to school in December, 1848; and though Barbara was not, she evidently had enjoyed considerable educational advantages. Her spelling is almost perfect, and, with a few punctuation marks judiciously distributed and capital letters properly placed, her sentences are up to a good standard. We may assume that John was given opportunities for instruction equal—probably superior—to

1. "A History of the Kägy Relationship in America," Harrisburg, Pa., 1899; page 325.

those enjoyed by his sisters. In 1812 *The Trump of Fame*, the first newspaper in the Western Reserve, was established in Warren; two years later a library was opened with 1000 volumes. In 1816 the *Trump of Fame* was succeeded by the *Western Reserve Chronicle*, which, under varying titles and a long succession of editors, is now a well-known daily. At Kinsman, near the northeastern corner of the county, and about twelve miles from Bristolville, was established in 1841-42 the Kinsman Academy, which for some years was one of the outstanding schools of the county.

As might be expected, the people of Trumbull County (named for Jonathan Trumbull, governor of Connecticut, 1769-1784) were not only outright opponents of slavery, they were also zealous missionaries in religion and temperance. The little village of Sodom, we are told, received its uncomplimentary name because of its indifference to early temperance workers. In North Bristol, a "suburb" of Bristolville, the women of the village once attacked a saloon and poured all the liquor into the mill pond. Bloomfield, a few miles north of Bristolville, was one of the most ardent anti-slavery communities of the region.

Bristolville, the home town of the Kageys, an important stopping-place on the stage-coach route between Lake Erie and the Ohio River, was also a center of anti-slavery activity. The old Methodist church of the village, a fine example of architecture in the New England style, and still well preserved, is a cherished landmark. While young John Kagi accepted the prevailing temperance and anti-slavery views, he soon became a free-thinker in religion. He found the writings of Thomas Paine and Voltaire more to his liking than the Gospels and Epistles. For this he was sharply criticized, but the two-story frame house in which he was born is one of the places of interest to which visitors in Bristolville are now directed.

CHAPTER V

Two Months in Virginia

In 1852 Abraham Neff Kagey, on his way to California, came to Shenandoah County, Virginia, and spent some time with his brothers, Henry, Jacob, David, and other kinsfolk before going to an ocean port (probably New York City) to board ship for his long journey. He and his son John arrived at the home of my grandfather, Jacob Kagey, in Shenandoah County, on June 18, 1852. They had come east through Pennsylvania. This appears from a letter that John wrote to one of his sisters from Lewistown, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, on June 13. This letter, with a number of others referred to herein, is now in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka. The arrival of John and his father at my grandfather's in Virginia, five days after the Lewistown letter was written, is recorded in my mother's diary.

Just when Uncle Abe (John's father) left Virginia for California, I have not been able to determine, though it was probably in the late summer or early autumn of 1852. John, on this his first visit to Virginia, remained about two months, judging from a statement he made in a letter that he wrote to one of his sisters from Shenandoah County on July 21, 1852, in which he said that he did not expect to return home (to Bristolville) before the last of August. In this letter he also said that he was, at the time of writing, helping his uncles, David and Henry, with their harvesting, which must have been unusually late that year. Most of the Virginia Kageys and Neffs were farmers, and the wheat harvest was usually over by the end of the first week in July.

It is not probable that John, now only a few months over seventeen years of age, had ever had much experience as a farm laborer, but evidently he must have pitched into the work of the harvest field with vim and skill. This appears from a

Home of Jacob Kagey, near Woodlawn, 3 miles north of Mt. Jackson, Shenandoah County, Va. Here his nephew, John Henri Kagi, spent much of his time while in Virginia, at intervals, between 1851 and 1856. This photograph was made about 1903. The old gentleman in the armchair is Abraham J. Kagey, son of Jacob, and a first-cousin of John Henri Kagi. He died Nov. 25, 1905, and the old house burned soon after his death.

letter which one of his Virginia cousins, Bettie (Neff) Miller, wrote to me many years later, and which I present below. This letter, dated February 15, 1909, was written in reply to my request for information concerning John Henri Kagi, made at the time I was preparing the magazine article on "One of John Brown's Men", referred to in Chapter I. Cousin Bettie wrote as follows:

> I was well acquainted with Cousin John Henry Kagey. He was tall, perhaps over six feet; fair complected and rather pleasant of address. In those days his education was considered good for one so young, not 21. He was a strong vegetarian—abstained from all kinds of meats. Also a strong Republican. We did not have many Republicans in Virginia then. He, like Lincoln, believed in freeing the slaves; several times told me the time was fast approaching when slavery would pass out of existence. For argument sake I tried to uphold it. He was much better versed in the Scriptures than I was, so he beat me out.
>
> I remember your uncle Abe [Abram J.] Kagey and others were at my father's one Sunday and Cousin John Henry said the colored race was as smart and good as the white, for Solomon was black, and your uncle Abe asked him how he knew Solomon was black. He remarked, 'Why, the Bible says so.'
>
> He was rather skeptical. I often tried to change his views—made him a present of the life of a young minister. Of course, he read it, though he remained unchanged.
>
> Sometime in the early fifties he and his father visited the then new states Nebraska and Kansas, for the purpose of purchasing a home. While there Cousin John wrote me he preferred Kansas of the two, while either would do for an infidel. He was a talented young man and could have been very useful. I firmly believe he did what he believed right when he came with John Brown to Harper's Ferry. I will always regret him being killed there.
>
> I said he was tall. He did not look so strong, as he was rather spare, though he was strong and active. He helped his uncle Henry Kagey harvest in heavy wheat—followed a cradle, which was to rake and bind the sheaves. Very few men could do it—two were always allowed to a cradle. He had his envious friends who sometimes talked about him. When he was told of remarks made he would laugh as though he enjoyed it the best kind, and never made any reply. That was a feature I admired in his character. He taught a school in Hawkinstown. A friend of mine visited the school and said he had such good rules.
>
> This is about all I can give you—hope you can read my writing; my pen is not extra.

It is evident that Mrs. Miller's recollections of her cousin John were based mainly upon her acquaintance with him during his second and longer sojourn in Virginia in 1854-55, though she of course saw him in 1852. Her father's farm adjoined that of Henry Kagey on which John helped to harvest in 1852, according to his own statement, and probably also in 1854. He almost certainly was not as tall as she remembered him—more of this later—but no doubt she is accurate in her statements concerning his interest in politics, his disposition to champion the Negro race, and his skepticism in regard to Christian teachings. George B. Gill, who knew him well, asserted that he was an agnostic "of the most pronounced type".[1] His skepticism must have given his cousin Bettie no little concern. Her father and her younger brother were devoted ministers of the Gospel, and she herself was devoutly religious.

Young Kagi evidently maintained a deep affection for his sisters and wrote to them frequently. On Sunday, July 23, 1852, just two days after the date of his letter referred to above, he addressed another letter to his sister, probably Mary, who at this time was only fifteen years of age, and was with relatives and friends at or near Bristolville. Barbara, aged nineteen, this year (1852) married Allen B. Mayhew and was moving to Nebraska, or preparing to do so. This letter was headed "Mt. Jackson." This was the postoffice of my grandfather and his family, whose home, near Woodlawn, was located due north of the town at a distance of two miles in a direct course across the fields, though the distance around the road was a mile farther. Locust Vale, the home of John's uncles, Henry and David, was about four miles southwest of Mt. Jackson, and three miles northeast of New Market.

In his letter of July 21, 1852, John remarked that he had left home three months before. Just where he was from April 21 till June 13, when he and his father were at Lewistown, Pennsylvania, has not been ascertained. Possibly he may have been visiting relatives in Pennsylvania, or he may

1. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, page 454.

have been attending school. It is not probable that his father left Bristolville long before June 13—I assume that he met John at Lewistown or some other point on the way to Virginia. Travel at that time was switching somewhat from canals and stage coaches to the railroads. The Pennsylvania Railroad westward to Pittsburgh was opened about this time, and it may be that Uncle Abe had come on the new railroad from Pittsburgh or some place near there to Lewistown. The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad was extended to Wheeling in January, 1853, and for a number of years prior to that date there was a railroad connecting with the Baltimore & Ohio at Harper's Ferry and running thence up to Winchester. We may be pretty certain that John and his father, coming up into the Shenandoah Valley (June, 1852), traveled over the railroad from Harper's Ferry to Winchester, there taking the stage up the Valley Turnpike to Hawkinstown or Mt. Jackson. This was, no doubt, John's first visit to Harper's Ferry. In all probability he passed through Harper's Ferry again on his return to Ohio two months later; he certainly was there on his trips between Ohio and Virginia in 1854-55, as revealed in his letters.

The Kagey home in Bristolville, Trumbull County, Ohio, birthplace and early home of John Henri Kagi. The photograph was made in 1958 by Mr. and Mrs. Lester R. McDonnell of Youngstown, Ohio, and supplied by them for this work.

CHAPTER VI

Abram in California

Abraham Neff Kagey, John Henri's father, was in California for three years, perhaps three years and a half. He came with John to Virginia, as we have seen, in June, 1852, and probably went on about the end of August, at the time when John returned to Ohio. On January 13, 1853, as my mother recorded in her diary, my grandfather, Jacob Kagey, wrote a letter to Uncle Abe, who, presumably, was in California at that time. From the letter that Uncle Abe wrote to my mother from Nevada City, October 27, 1853, given below, it appears that he had been in California the preceding spring, when he saw the native flowers in bloom. He got back to my grandfather's (his brother Jacob's) in Shenandoah County, Virginia, on July 2, 1856. If it took him 30-odd days from San Francisco to New York, crossing Panama, and three days from New York to my grandfather's, he could have been in California until the latter part of May, 1856.

I am basing this estimate of the time required to make the trip back to New York and Virginia upon the actual time spent upon trips between New York and San Francisco by Dr. Thomas Flint in 1851 and 1853. From May 28th to June 6th, 1851, Dr. Flint sailed from New York to the Bay of Chagres; crossed the Isthmus in the next three days to Panama, where he waited six days for a steamer which docked at San Francisco on July 7, forty days after he had left New York. Returning over the same route in January, 1853, he made the trip from San Francisco to New York in twenty-seven days.[1]

A number of letters were exchanged with relatives in Vir-

1. See the "Diary of Dr. Thomas Flint, California to Maine and Return," reprinted from the annual publications of the Historical Society of Southern California, 1923, Los Angeles; pages 2-10.

ginia while Uncle Abe was in California, only one of which, so far as I know, has been preserved. This one I have. It was written to my mother (Abram's niece) on a full sheet of letter-paper (four pages, each 7 5/8 by 9 3/4 inches), and the ink has not perceptibly faded. The paper bears the inconspicuous stamp of A. S. Barne & Co., New York. Inasmuch as this letter gives interesting information about early California and tells most that we know about Uncle Abe's sojourn in the gold fields, I submit a copy of the letter in full, herewith:

Nevada Cal, Oct. 27, 1853

My Dear Niece

I Embrace the first opportunity of a Mail leaving Cal. for N. Y. to Inform you that I received your kind and affectionate letter by the last Mail, and I asure you that I was glad to hear from you and the rest of them, and I will just State that I will take cair of that lock of hair which you Sent to me in token of your regard of my wellfare. Now I will Inform you that I am well and have been ever Since I wrote my last letter to your Father, And I Hope that these few lines will find you all in good Health, Further I received one letter by the Same Mail of your Uncle Isaac, they were all well at the time of his writing, (I mean Isaac Kagy,) But I had no letter from home in the last Mail, but in the Next to the last I had two from home and one from Barbara Ann, and they were well then,

You State that you have had a Dry Season, what do [you] think about the Season in Cal. we have had no rain to lay the Dust Since the 9 of June last, and very likely waunt have untill the midle of November, or the first of December, and it is very Dry now. Our Business is Dull now and has been for Some time on account of the Dry wether for Miners must have water to wash gold with, and from them we expect our money for our work we have to furnish them in tools to work with.

I was informed in John's last letter that your Uncle David had Sold his Shair of the old Home Sted, he just Stated that he had a letter from his Cousin Abe, and that they had Sold for $5000, and that was all the Information that I had from there, I had a letter from your Uncle & 1 from Abe, but it was before he Sold, or else he did not Inform me of it in his letter.

As a General thing it is considerable Healthy about Nevada, and but few Deaths Since I have been hear, But we hear of considerable many Murders commited in Cal. but by whom no one knows, but the one who done it, There is one Man in the County

Jail now who was found Guilty at the last Court of Murder, and very likely will be Hung by the Neck untill he is Dead, for killing a China Man, some time in August last, the man is from the State of Indiana, and has a Wife living there.

You wanted me to Send you Some pretty flower Seed if I Saw any in Cal, Now I Saw a good many last Spring, and Some very Nice one to, but it is out of Season now for them, and a nother thing is I am in the Shop all most the whole of the time. But if I should live till Next Spring and can get Some I will indevor to Send you Some, So that Should I ever Get to Shenandoah again I may See Some Cal. flowers groing there in your yard.

Now I will Give you a Short Discription of our village that is Kayoterville [Coyotesville?] is a little village about ½ Mile from Nevada City, and the In corporation line runs about through the Center of it, There are about 12 or 15 Houses or you may call the ½ of them not log Cabins but clabboard cabins, Seald with paper or Cloth, and Some of them not that, and perhaps Some have no flores in them, I have not been in them all, and in this village there are but 3 Familys with Children, 1 with 3, 1 with 4, and the other with five, and the rest of us do as old Bacholders & old Maids do, and that is keep Bacholders Hall, we have one of the gratest cabins out of Jail,—O if you was to see it you would laugh out loud before you would think, Now its one of em, it is 12 by 16 or there about, and about 6 ft. high that is to the Ruff, two Doors in it, and I know you could not Guess in a week how many windows there are in it, So I will tell you, there is not one window or one window hole, now you have it, we have 1 old table (and that is all Black) 4 Stools and one of them has but 3 legs, 2 Bunks to Sleep on and a few tin Dishes, But I try to keep them clean, for on them we eat our potatoes & Ham, and Some times Beans & cabage,

Now I will give you the price of Such things as we Buy, that is in the Provision line, Ham 30c per lb. Potatoes 7c per lb. Butter 50c per lb. Onions 12½c per lb. Cabbage 5c per lb. Honney 37½c per lb. Dried apples 25c per lb. Candles 62½c per lb. and Milch 37½c per qt. well I must bring my letter to an end for it is almost full of Such as it is, Remember my love to your Father, Mother, Brothers & Sister, and all Inquiring friends, So good By be a good Girl, And I Remain your affectionate uncle.

A. N. Kagy

By referring to the map I find that Nevada City is the county-seat of Nevada County, California, and is located about 55 miles northeast of Sacramento, and not far west of the

Sierra Nevada mountain range. Reno, Nevada, is about 70 miles east, on the opposite side of the range.

Isaac Kagey, mentioned in the letter above, was Abraham's youngest brother, who at the time was living in Illinois or Indiana. Barbara Ann (Mrs. Allen Mayhew), Abraham's older daughter, with her husband, had located the year preceding at Nebraska City. "Abe" was probably one of the older sons of David Neff Kagey—David who had sold out at Locust Vale to his brother Henry for $5000.00, and moved to Bridgewater.

On December 5, 1853, Anna recorded in her diary that she had received a letter from A. N. Kagey—the one, in all probability, that was written the preceding October 27 and presented above. Other letters passed from time to time between her and other members of the family and Uncle Abe in California. Within the same period she exchanged letters with Mary and John at Bristolville, Ohio. On July 2, 1856, she made in her diary the following entry: "Uncle A.N.K. arrived from Cal."

I was told that Uncle Abe one time sailed around Cape Horn and another time crossed the Isthmus of Panama. I have a small sea-shell that he brought my mother from the Isthmus, and Charles L. Kagey, of Kansas, shortly before his death, wrote me that his family too had such a shell. I can hardly believe that Uncle Abe would have carried these shells to California on the way out, so I assume that he sailed around the Horn going out and crossed the Isthmus coming back. I regret very much now that I did not ask Uncle Abe a number of questions when we visited him in Nebraska in 1881 and when he was with us in Virginia in 1884. If I had done so and had written down what he might have told me I should now have much more to relate about his experiences on the ocean, in California, and in Panama. I am of the opinion that he carried some of his blacksmithing tools with him, going out and coming back.

CHAPTER VII

Politics and Phonography

The movements of young John Henri Kagi between the time he returned to Ohio from Virginia in the summer of 1852 until he came to Virginia again in the summer of 1854 have not been definitely recorded, so far as I know; but we do have a few illuminating sidelights on his interests and activities during that period. Richard J. Hinton, who became intimately acquainted with him a few years later, says that when he returned to Bristolville from Virginia he taught school in the neighborhood and began the study of law; that he taught himself phonography and French; that he made it a practice to attend lyceums and debating clubs, working also at his reporting; that he grew firmer and sterner in his anti-slavery convictions, identifying himself in 1854 with the local free-soil agitation.[1]

Hinton, in the same connection, states that John had been sent to an academy by his uncle, Jackson Neff, and that he had attended the constitutional convention in Kentucky, there reporting the proceedings of the convention. "It was excellent drill and made of him a proficient verbatim reporter."

I have no information concerning "Jackson Neff." The Kentucky constitutional convention was held in 1850, when John was only fifteen. If he attended the meetings of that body I imagine he went in company with some older persons of Trumbull County who were keenly interested in what was being done in Kentucky, since the question of slavery (or anti-slavery) was one of the main issues before the convention. If young Kagi actually attended the convention, it was he, no doubt, who told Hinton about it.

In 1850, Congress passed the famous "Omnibus Bill"—the Compromise of 1850, one article of which provided that offi-

1. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, page 456.

cials in the free states were to apprehend fugitive slaves and send them back to their masters. Although this provision was often disregarded and the law soon became a dead letter, it aroused keen agitation and opposition in the free states, and we may be certain that this was one of the things that stirred the spirit of John Henri Kagi to protest and thwarting effort. About this time he began to write for the public press. In the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society is a letter he wrote at Bristolville on August 30, 1853, addressed to a publisher, "Mr. Howard." On October 30 of the same year a young friend of John's, Heman Bangs Hammon, of Bristolville, wrote a letter (which I have) to my mother, in which he refers to John's politics. A copy of this letter follows:

Bristolville Ohio October 30th 1853

Respected Friend

I am in recpt of your welcom letter of the 26th of *last Month* (*September*) I acknowledge I have been Some what Dillatory in my answer, but I *hope* for *pardon*. my occupation in life is Such that I have to occupy most of my time in worldly affairs, but still *sooner* or *later* I find time to answer Friendly Communications. I know that our acquaintance has been formed in rather a strange way, but Still that is no reason why we cannot be Friends. the health of your Cousins, Mary & John is very Good at the present time, John is Spending his time in Bloomfield—Mary is visiting her Relations in *Deacon Creek* the east part of Bristol, in General we are in fine Spirits especially the Democrats after *our Glorious Victory*, you Spoke of the Friendship that existed between John & Myself it is all very *true*, but in *politics we* are *great enemy's* he is a Free-Soiler and I am what he terms a *Loco-Foco*, but enough on that subject, he (John) has often told me of the fine Sports he enjoyed in Va, and I as often wished that I had been with him there but I must bid my time, I have many Relations and I trust Some Friends, living there. I have never Seen any of my relations that live in Virginia except Aaron Hammon you said that Jon wrote in his letter that he entended to go to *California* next Spring & that you would like to have him visit you before his departure. all that I have to say is that he will go when *I do*. and you can imagine when that will be, for I am the only *behoy* that my *Parents'* have to look to for their Support in comming life, if you Should ever visit this part of *America* a visit from *you* will be very agreeable, with my respects to all my unacquainted Friends I remain

Your Friend & well wisher

Heman Bangs Hammon.

The Hammons were from Shenandoah County, Virginia, and probably were related to the Fanslers, John's mother's family. When John went back to Ohio from Virginia in the summer of 1852 he, I imagine, brought about the exchange of letters between young Hammon and Anna M. Kagey.

In 1837 appeared an important work entitled "Stenographic Sound-Hand." Some three years later the title was changed to "Phonography". Largely, no doubt, as a result of this publication, the study and practice of shorthand writing, we are told, "took a sudden and mighty leap," rising from a means of pastime and recreation to be the serious handmaid of literature, business, and politics. John Kagi soon became numbered among its devotees. At Bristolville, on February 4, 1854, he wrote an essay on phonography, in which he proposed some very practical amendments to the English alphabet, to make it more serviceable to sound and sense. By the obliging courtesy of the curator of manuscripts of the Kansas State Historical Society I am enabled to present a copy of this essay herewith:

IMPERFECTIONS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The English Language is spoken by a greater portion of the people of the enlightened world than any other. A people speaking the English language were the first to declare and adhere to the maxim that "All men are created free and equal."

Wherever it is introduced, [it] opens the road for civilization and science, and perhaps but a few centuries will elapse before it will be the language of the entire world, if it continues its bold and fearless march. It combines all the grace and elegance of the French, with the comprehensiveness of the Latin, Greek, and German. It is the authorized language of two of the most powerful nations of the globe, and it follows in the footsteps of their every conquest. Its basis, the Anglo-Saxon, was the combination of the languages of two savage German tribes. It, at first consisted of 1,700 words; these were formed by the combinations of 23 vocal sounds. At length the alphabet of the Latins, containing 24 letters was adopted for representing these sounds. Words have been added from time to time, from other languages until it now numbers upwards of 60,000. The number of sounds has also been increased to 42, while but 2 letters have been added to the alphabet.

The Kagey monument in the park in Bristolville, Trumbull County, Ohio. The photograph was made in 1958 by Mr. and Mrs. Lester R. McDonnell of Youngstown, Ohio, and was supplied by them for this work.

This is the greatest defect of the language. There being 16 vocal sounds which have no proper representatives, the 26 seem to vie with each other in representing them in the most blundering manner possible. Soon these letters became exhausted, and are not even able to perform their own proper duties, and therefore they must join hands to do it. Thus: the letter 'A' having exhausted all its powers in such words as *at*, *far*, *all* &c. which have no legal representatives for their vowel sounds, when called upon to make sleigh obstinately refuses, and *e*, *i*, *g* and *h* are compelled to join hands and come to the rescue, thus being used to represent but a single vocal sound, which might have been just as easily done by one. A child is taught at first that 'a' is ā next that it is

ă then again that it is ä and finally that it is â and so on until he is brought to the conclusion that it is almost every thing but nothing particular. These are but a few of the examples which might be given, did time permit, to show that there is a deficiency in the representatives of the elementary sounds of our language, which is no inconsiderable barrier to the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of it. How is this obstacle to be overcome? How may it be removed, so that the road leading to science may be shortened, and the necessity of a man's wasting years of precious time in learning how many lies a letter can tell, be wholly avoided? *By retaining the letters we now have, in their usual sense and adding* 16 *more.* Then can every sound be represented by its own letter, and no letter need represent any other than its proper sound, and there will be no guessing, & Braincracking necessary to tell what sound a letter then has.

In this manner, at least one year of the life of every individual, might be saved. Say the human family amounts to twelve hundred millions, say a generation is thirty years; then the human family would save in one year, forty million of years. Astounding! forty millions of years of precious time saved in twelve months! What would this time amount to (be worth) at one hundred dollars per year? It would be four billions of dollars, nearly twice the number of minutes since creation. Or, in the U. S. alone, there would be annual saving of one hundred millions of dollars, enough to build an Academy in every town in the United States. Surely it would be a money making business if nothing else; But that, of all its blessings would be the least. Such an alphabet has been constructed, and is now used extensively in the schools of Boston, and in most of the free schools throughout the state of Mass. And so simple is it, that it can be mastered by any one who can read the common or Romanic print, in *ten minutes;* and by an adult who is entirely ignorant of the old method, in as many hours, and it only awaits the approval of the people, to shed its blessings upon the world.

J. H. Kagi.

Bristol, February 4th, 1854.

This essay certainly affords a good example of Kagi's zeal for a cause in which he believed and that direct and incisive style which in later years made his pen an effective weapon against his political opponents. And we can hardly overlook the significance of his initial reference to freedom and equality.

CHAPTER VIII

John and Mary in Virginia

During much of the time that their father was in California, John Henri Kagi and his younger sister, Mary, were in Virginia: John for a period of ten months; Mary, for a year and eight months.

For this, his second visit, John arrived at my grandfather's on June 6, 1854. The preceding day, enroute, he had written to Mary, at their home in Bristolville, Ohio, from Winchester. On June 19, as my mother recorded in her diary, he moved his trunk to my grandfather's, where he made his home. On July 2 (1854) he wrote again to his sister and indicated the latter part of the course he had followed on his journey to Virginia, namely, by way of Albany, New York City, Trenton, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Harper's Ferry, and Winchester. Although he does not say so, we may be pretty certain that he had come to Albany from the west, probably Buffalo, on the Erie Canal.

It was nearly two years since he had been in Virginia, and evidently within the interval he had changed considerably in personal appearance, for he wrote to Mary (July 2): "Hardly any of the folks knew me—Abe knew I was coming, & no other. He knew me as also did cousin Anna M."

"Anna M." was my mother. On April 25, preceding, she had married John Wesley Wayland, but she was still living at my grandfather's, as was "Abe", her older brother, Abram J. Kagey, who was now between 20 and 21 years of age, John's senior by about a year and three months. Joel Francis Kagey, her younger brother, was not quite nine years old.

In this same letter of July 2, which may be seen in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka, John says, "They are all harvesting here now." He probably assisted in the work, as he had done in the summer of 1852.

Doubtless it was in this summer of 1854 that John, by himself, raked and bound wheat after a cradler, and that Cousin Bettie (Neff) Miller thought he was over six feet tall. Richard J. Hinton, who knew him several years later, says, "He was tall and somewhat angular, with a slight stoop in the shoulders, about five feet eleven inches in height, and weighing one hundred and fifty pounds."[1] With a height of five feet eleven, and weighing only 150 pounds, he would have been rather spare, as Cousin Bettie remembered him—see Chapter V. Franklin Keagy, who saw him daily for some time in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in 1859, wrote of him: "He was of medium height and build, had large blue-gray eyes, and a somewhat round face, full of expression when engaged in animated conversation, but somewhat careless in his dress."[2]

If John was tall, say as much as five feet eleven, he may have inherited in this respect from his mother's people (the Fanslers) rather than from the Kageys. I knew John's father (Uncle Abe) and have seen twenty-one of his first cousins, twelve men and nine women, with most of whom I have been well acquainted, and only one or two of them, as I now remember them, were above medium height. Uncle Abe (John's father) was about five feet nine inches in height, rather stocky when I knew him as an old man, weighing perhaps 170 or 180 pounds. This description would approximate most of the Kagey men I have known, including Franklin Keagy, the family historian. The Shenandoah County Neffs have generally been of medium height or under it, and somewhat lighter in weight than the Kageys.

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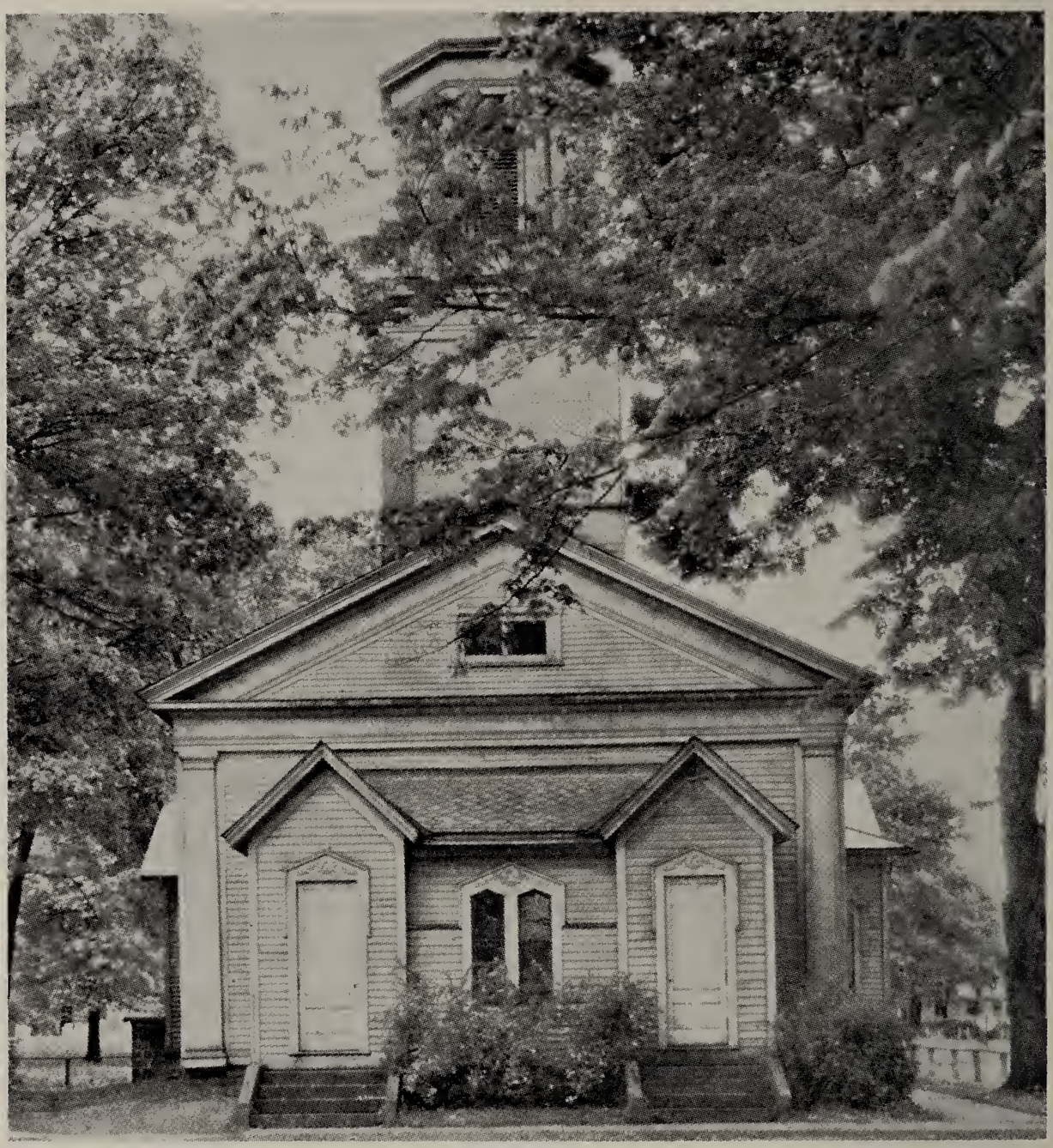
On July 20, 1854, my mother made in her diary this entry: "J. H. K. went up on the river." "Up on the river" in the common talk of the family at Woodlawn meant the Kagey-Neff neighborhood at Rude's Hill, which is on the north fork of the Shenandoah River, three miles southwest of Mt. Jackson. The stream is a small one here, about thirty yards in

1. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, pages 452, 453.
2. "A History of the Kägy Relationship", Harrisburg, 1899, page 331.



Bristolville Methodist Church, in which Abraham Neff Kagey held membership. By courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Celebration Committee.

width, and most of the time easily fordable with horses and wagons. "On the river" John no doubt made his headquarters at Locust Vale, his father's birthplace and old home, then occupied by John's uncle, Henry Neff Kagey. Henry's brother David, who had for years been a joint owner and occupant of Locust Vale, had sold out to Henry the year before and moved to Bridgewater, in Rockingham County. On July 26 my mother wrote, "John went to Bridgewater." There he was a

guest in the home of his uncle David, who had a family at this time of six sons and daughters, all younger than John, but two (sons) nearly grown.

On August 20 (1854) John wrote to his sister Mary:

"I am now at Uncle Jacob's, where I have my home. I have been rambling around all over the state, visiting &c much of the time; occasionally teaching Phonography. I commence a class in Edinburg, a good sized town six miles distant from this place,—this week some time.—I know what I am going ot do one year from this fall; I am going either to Kansas or Nebraska if Father comes home; and if he should not—but in all probability he will—I may at least go to Nebraska to take a look at the country."

John's father did not return from California until the summer of 1856. His sister, Barbara Mayhew, and her husband had been in Nebraska for about two years. Their residence there naturally drew John's interest towards that region. Besides, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, enacted as law in May (1854), made the territories, Kansas especially, an arena of contest between the free-state men and the pro-slavery forces. John Henri Kagi, an ardent free-state champion, scented the battle from afar. Missouri became the chief base of operations for making Kansas a slave state; Iowa and Nebraska were utilized by the free-soilers not only for getting into Kansas but also for getting out with Negroes who were being led to freedom in Canada. The Mayhew home at Nebraska City soon became one of the stations on the "underground railroad." It is rather surprising that young Kagi planned to wait until the fall of 1855 before going to Nebraska or Kansas. As it turned out, his plans were changed: he went earlier than at first anticipated.

On August 24, 1854, as my mother records, John and his uncle Jacob went to see the school trustees of Hawkinstown, a small village on the Valley Pike two miles northeast of Mt. Jackson and nearly the same distance southeast (almost east) from Woodlawn and my grandfather's home. Evidently an

agreement was reached with the trustees, for John on September 13 wrote to his sister Mary that he was teaching school in Hawkinstown; had about 40 "scholars"; was teaching the common branches, also algebra, geography, English grammar, natural philosophy, chemistry, geometry, botany, and astronomy. He felt the need of an assistant or two, and spoke of certain ones (probably in Ohio) that he thought might do well in the work with him.[3]

Mary, at this time aged seventeen, her brother in Virginia, her sister in Nebraska, and her father in California, was perhaps getting lonesome in Ohio. At any rate, steps were taken to bring her to Virginia. John left for Ohio on September 18, (1854), and on October 14 he and Mary arrived at my grandfather's. John evidently resumed his school at Hawkinstown, and Mary spent the time at my grandfather's and at various other places with relatives and friends—"on the river", in Rockingham, at Hawkinstown, etc. Between October 14, 1854, and March 26, 1855, my mother's diary contains no fewer than thirty-seven references to the goings and comings of Mary and John.

On March 13, 1855, young Kagi closed his school at Hawkinstown. This fact, thus tersely stated, is all that is found in Anna's diary of that date, but from statements made many years later by my father and mother, and from other sources, I learned why the school was closed at that time. A letter written by my uncle, Joel F. Kagey, on February 16, 1909, throws light on the situation, and this letter I quote:

Hawkinstown Va Feb 16—1909

John

You asked me if I could tell you anything about Cousin John that was with John Brown at Harper's Ferry, I did know all about him, but my memory has gotten so bad I dont suppose I could give you any thing that would help you. I suppose you know he spent sometime here in Va after he grew to be a man. That he taught school in Hawkinstown one

3. See this letter of September 13, 1854, and others in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka.

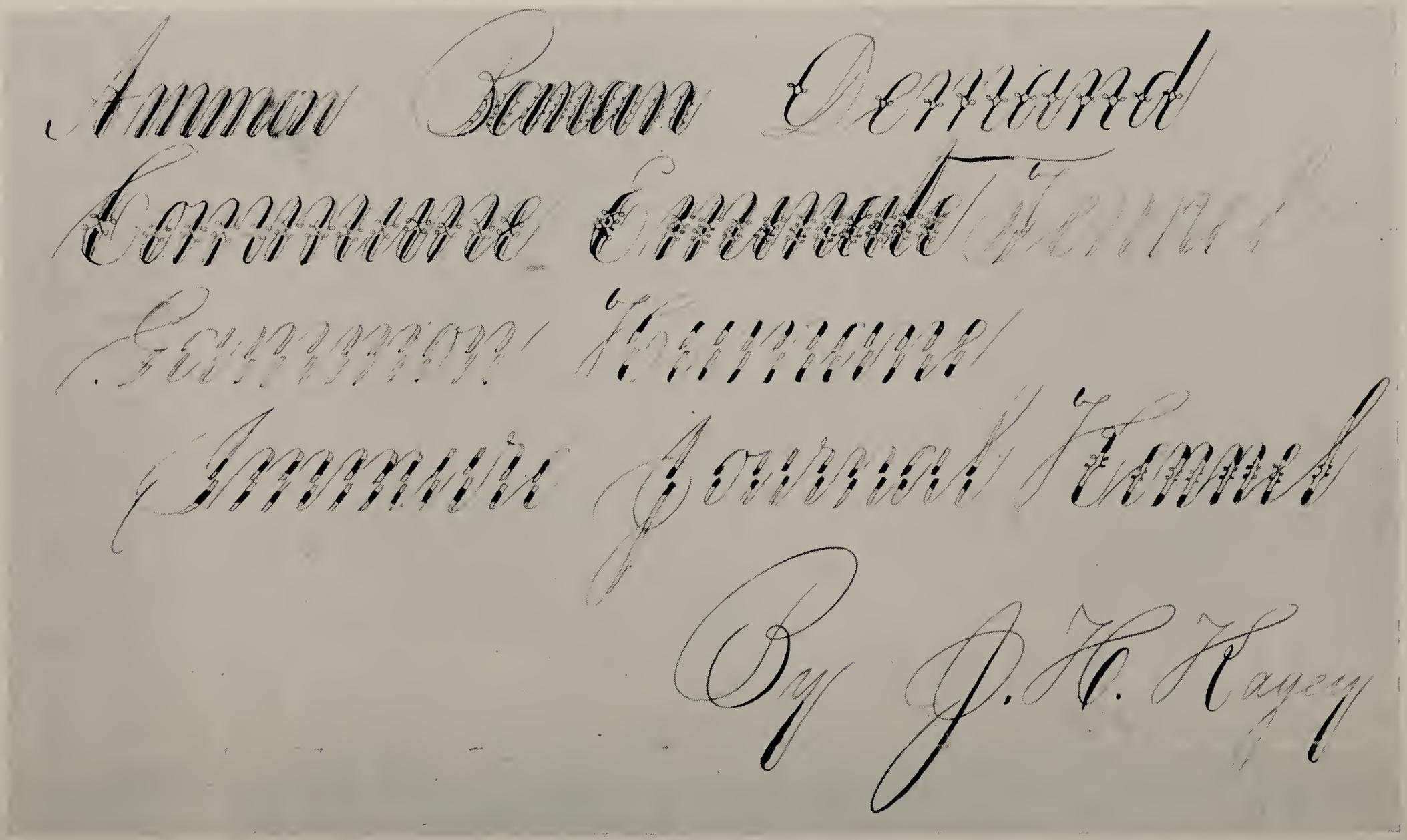
winter, that he tried to put bad feelings in the darkies around here towards their Masters, and that if My Father had not talked to John J. Allen and other men who had Slaves, they would have arrested him, but through Father's influence they let him go back to Ohio with a promise never to come back here again. After he went back to Ohio, he went out to Kansas, and joined in with old Jim Lane in the Kansas troubles, & while there met with old John Brown and others, and finally came back to Penn a short time before the trouble at Harper's Ferry, where he was shot while Swiming the Potomac, near the Maryland Shore, had he reached the Md side, ten chances to one he would have made his escape, for awhile. He was a man of good sense & education, but was clean crazy on the nigger question.

Hope this will find you all well. Love & good wishes to all, from all. As ever your uncle

Joel

Uncle Joel at the time of this writing was a man of 64. During the latter part of the Civil War he had served with distinction as a Confederate cavalryman. For some time after the war he was in Nebraska with Uncle "California Abe" and other members of the family. During many years of his later life, like many other old Confederates of northern Virginia, he was a staunch and active Republican, but evidently he did not think very favorably of the doings of John Brown and his associates. None of the Virginia Kageys, so far as I know, owned slaves. The majority of the old families of Shenandoah and adjoining counties were Germans from Pennsylvania and did not generally favor slavery. Most of the slaves in this region were held (in small numbers) by people of English, Scottish, or Irish stock. The lower parts of the Shenandoah Valley, adjacent to Harper's Ferry, had been settled largely by families from eastern Virginia, and there slaves were more numerous.

What Uncle Joel wrote in 1909 concerning John Kagi's activities among the Allen slaves and perhaps others of the neighborhood agrees with what I always heard from other sources, but his memory was at fault about the river in which John Henri was killed, which was the Shenandoah, not the



John Henri Kagi's fancy penmanship; his drawing of the quill pen below omitted.

Potomac. Hall's rifle factory, from which John and his companions were driven, was located alongside the Shenandoah a short distance above its confluence with the Potomac. Along the opposite (eastern) shore of the Shenandoah a wooded mountain, part of the Blue Ridge, known as Loudoun Heights, rises abruptly. It is in the edge of Jefferson County, now West Virginia, but runs alongside Loudoun County, Virginia, hence the name, Loudoun Heights.

John was not hustled out of the Hawkinstown and Woodlawn neighborhood immediately upon the closing of his school in Hawkinstown on March 13, 1855. On the 22d he and my grandfather were at a public sale in the vicinity; and the next day he went up to his uncle Henry's "on the river," returning to my grandfather's on the 25th. This was Sunday. On Monday, March 26, my mother wrote in her diary, "J. H. Kagi left for Nebraska".

As indicated by Mrs. Bettie Miller and Joel F. Kagey, John Henri not only placed a high estimate upon the natural qualities of the Negro race, he also gave free and frequent expression to his views. One day at my grandfather's my mother's sister Elizabeth, a fun-loving girl, John's junior by a year, decided to put him to the test. She called him into the house and politely introduced him to a sprightly young Negro woman who had dropped in. This made John furiously angry—he resented the trick my aunt played on him.

My mother and others admired John's fine penmanship, and he on one occasion gave my mother a piece of blue-tinted paper, seven and a half by eight inches in size, on which he had written a number of words in various fancy styles, with his name and a very excellent drawing of a quill pen. This paper I have, and it is reproduced herewith. Oddly enough, in signing this paper, John did not follow his usual spelling of the family name, "Kagi", which was in accordance with phonetics and the original practice, but wrote it "Kagey" as did most of his kinsfolk.

He had two gold pens, I heard my mother say, one of

which was of rather small size, suitable for a lady's hand. She one day, jokingly, told him that he ought to give this pen to her. Not long afterwards, perhaps the following evening, he said, "I wish I had given you that pen." "Why?" He replied: "Today when my horse stopped in the river to drink I leaned over and it fell out of my pocket into the water."

Many of John's letters, written in later years, were evidently scribbled in haste and show very little of the precision and elegance in penmanship of which he was capable.

After John's departure for Nebraska in March, 1855, his sister Mary remained with her kinsfolk in Virginia until her father returned from California in the summer of 1856. She was skilled with scissors and needle, and did much cutting and sewing for a number of families in the neighborhood.

CHAPTER IX

The Family in Nebraska

On March 30, 1855, John wrote to his sister Mary (in Virginia) from Cincinnati the following letter:

Cincinnati, Mar. 30th 1855
4 P. M.

Dear Sister:

We arrived here about 9 o'clock this morning on the Steamer J. C. Fremont. We would have had a pleasant passage, had it not been so tremendiously [*sic*] cold. The wind had been blowing very hard, constantly since we left Wheeli[n]g until this morning, when it nearly ceased. I've felt about as blue as an *indigo bag* every since I left Winchester, but I've now got nearly over my cold, and feel quite run*aboutable*, as I have been all over the city 3 or 4 times I guess. Now Mary, I suppose that by this time, a little book ("Biographies of the Presidents") has arrived at the Mt. Jackson Office. If so, take it out & send it over to Ike Foltz's Margret. It is her prize in the spelli[n]g class. Our boat will stop here several day's, perhaps a week or more, & as it is about the best boat on the river I shall stay upon it. Boats run down every day, so I can go at any time I wish to. Perhaps I shall write again at St. Louis, cant tell. This boat goes no farther than St. Louis

But I must close,

As ever

J. H. Kagi.

P. S. I've sent—or they will be sent soon some presents to Aunt Barbara & Liz & will send some to the rest. I am just about tired out now. They will be sent to Uncle Jacob's name, and their names will be on the inside, on the fly leaf.

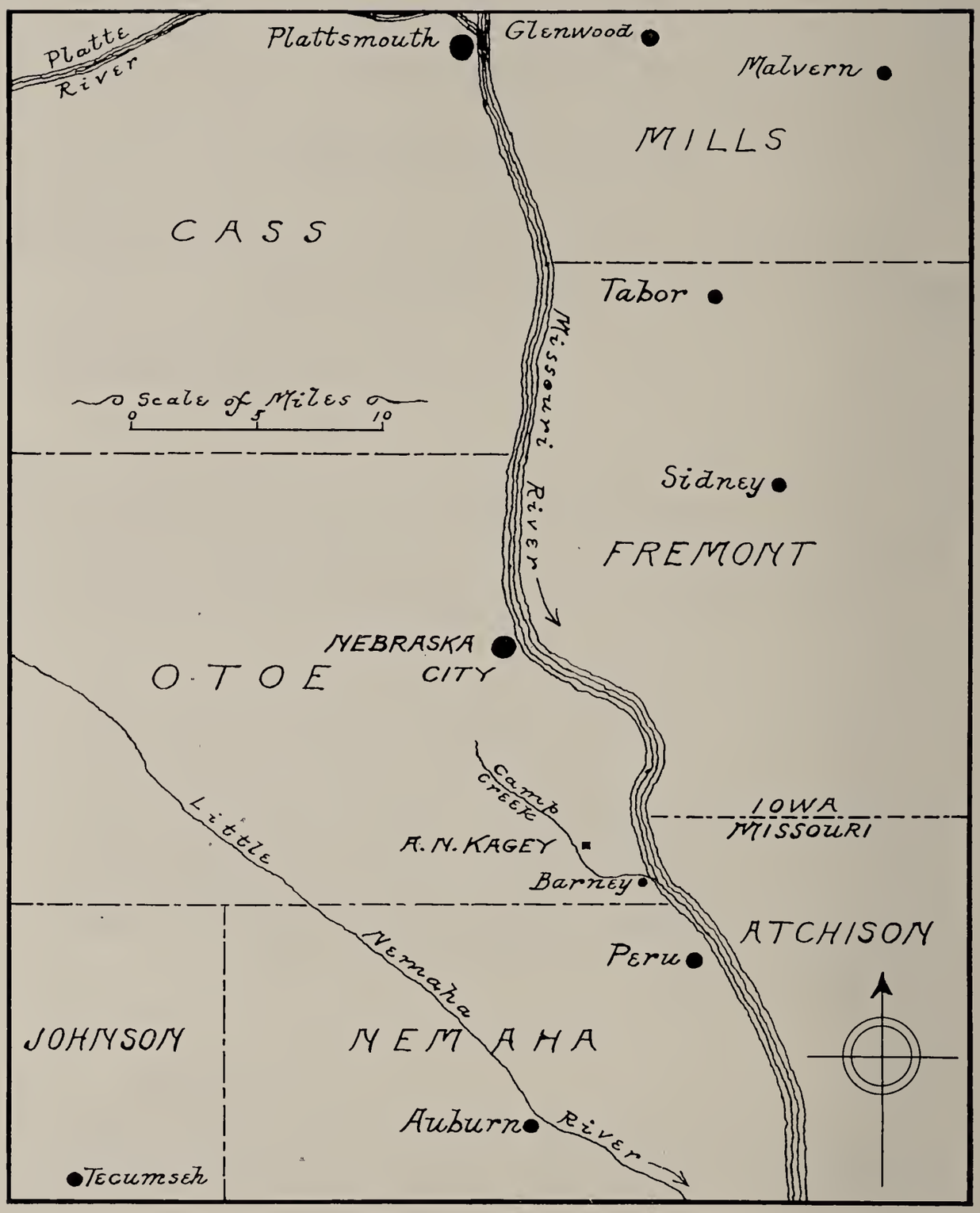
J. H. K.

P. S. Again.

The next letter you write, send in the enc*losed envelop*.

J. H. K.[1]

1. This letter is now in the possession of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka, and I have been enabled to present a complete copy of it here through the kindness of Miss Louise Barry, Curator of Manuscripts.



Uncle Joel, in his letter of February 16, 1909, says that John went from Virginia to Ohio and thence to Kansas, but from the foregoing letter written by John at Cincinnati it is obvious that he proceeded westward, not stopping in Ohio. If he left Mt. Jackson or Hawkinstown by stage-coach to Winchester on March 26, 1855, went by rail from Winchester to Harper's Ferry, there boarded a Baltimore & Ohio train which

carried him to Wheeling, and thence traveled down the Ohio River on the *J. C. Fremont* to Cincinnati, arriving there at nine o'clock on the morning of the 30th, he certainly was making good time and close connections—he could not have interjected a trip from Wheeling up to Bristolville and back. In this same letter he tells Mary that he would perhaps write again from St. Louis. Evidently he was westward bound.

We may conclude that he went all the way from Wheeling to St. Louis by steamer—down the Ohio and up the Mississippi—and he probably went by the same mode of conveyance from St. Louis to Nebraska City, by way of the "Big Muddy" across the state of Missouri and then northward along the border of Kansas and a bit of southeastern Nebraska. During the next year (1856) or the greater part of it the Missouri River, through the state of Missouri, was policed by pro-slavery men who turned back free-soilers, or persons whom they judged to be such. While these obstructing measures were in effect it was necessary for anti-slavery immigrants to Kansas to take a northward course from St. Louis or some point near there and go through Iowa and Nebraska. By the summer of 1856 James H. Lane had laid out a trail through Knoxville, Osceola, and Quincy, Iowa, to Nebraska City, on the west bank of the Missouri River, and thence southward through Nebraska into northeastern Kansas. This trail was marked by heaps of stones that could be seen from one hilltop to another. These stone-piles were known as "Lane's Chimneys", and some were still remaining in 1880.[2]

Margaret Foltz, to whom the "Biographies of the Presidents" was sent as a prize, was no doubt one of John's pupils in the school at Hawkinstown. "Aunt Barbara" was Jacob Kagey's wife; "Liz" was his younger daughter, whom John had apparently forgiven for her trick in presenting him to the Negro girl. The enclosed "envelop" was probably addressed to an alias—perhaps to keep the slaveholders at Hawkinstown

2. See pages 71-73 of "The Political Career of General James H. Lane," in the Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society, Vol. III, 1930.

and Mt. Jackson from learning anything as to his whereabouts.

Nebraska City, built on the site of old Fort Kearney, was laid out in 1854-55. The place was strategic in travel and trade—the American Fur Company had established a post here in 1826. In 1852 or thereabouts Allen B. Mayhew and his wife Barbara Kagey came out from Ohio and built a log cabin adjoining or on the town-site, which Mayhew helped to lay out in 1854, and in which he became the purchaser of considerable tracts of land. The size of his cabin, which is still preserved, was only 14 by 16 feet, but was strongly built of hewn logs, securely dovetailed at the corners. It is now said to be the oldest building in Nebraska. I used to hear it said in my family that Uncle "California Abe" once owned the land where Nebraska City now stands, but that was evidently a mistake, since he did not go to Nebraska until the fall of 1856. He may have owned land there later; but it appears that his son-in-law Mayhew was on the ground, probably as a squatter, before the town was laid out; and he evidently was a man of standing and some means there. On August 22, 1857, he gave ten acres for burial purposes, a tract now known as Wyuka Cemetery, in Nebraska City.[3]

The next definite information I have of John Henri Kagi after he went to Nebraska in the spring of 1855, is contained in a letter he wrote in December of the same year from Nebraska City to his sister Mary, who was still in Shenandoah County, Virginia, to wit:

Nebraska City,
Dec. 24th 1855.

Dear Sister—

It has been sometime since I have written to you but not near as long as it has been since I have received a letter from you, for

3. See a booklet entitled "John Henry Kagi and the Old Log Cabin Home, published by Edward D. Bartling of Nebraska City, revised edition, 1940.

In a letter of June 9, 1958, from Nebraska City, Mrs. Geo. C. Rowe says: "The John Henry Kagi cabin at Nebraska City is still owned by the estate of Edward Bartling. We have the property under lease and the museum pieces are our personal property. The entire development of the cabin site into an historical park is our project."

that has been a very long time—Since I have written to you I have also written to Abe once or twice, but you are all as *silent as the grave*. Why I do not know.

I have now nothing of importance to write but that you may know that I've not quite forgotten you yet.

I received two letters from father last week, both of which were written after he had again gone into his shop in Nevada or Coyote-ville.

He writes that he will start for home about the last of April or the first of May so he will be in Bristol about the first of June. I am now as I have been for some time, teaching phonography. I shall go home in the spring as I have before written to you, or Abe at least.

Allen & the rest of the farmers in the vicinity, are busy in gathering their corn stocks, and sawing them off & digging them out to ship to New Orleans in the spring for *sugar Hogsheads*, that all the use they make of the corn crop here. (Have you anything more to say about big corn?) It has been quite cold for several days past, the thermometer standing at daylight at zero. And then, Oh! heavens such winds as come across the prairie from the north-west, strong enough to blow an iron wedge out of a 60 feet deep well—fact —.

A Rocky Mountain Bear had wandered all the way from the mountains—and came into the town the other day, where he was chased at once by one or two hundred armed with shooting in-struments who *took him down* from a tree about a mile out of town. Wolves are very thick but they never attack people. One cannot go a mile on the prairie without seeing as many as fi[f]ty or more. But they are being killed off very fast, one man has killed over a hundred.

Prairie chickens are plenty—am going out to kill a dozen for a Christmas supper to morrow—A happy Christmas to you all—is as good as Merry.

Ink is all froze up—

I had a letter from Stearn but a day or two ago; nothing new but that Thompson, Pottingill, Metcalf and Fonsler have gone into their mercantile business with a rush. Have you received any money from Pa?

Write soon—Abe too—& the rest of 'em.

As ever

J. H. Kagi.[4]

4. This letter in its original form is in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka, and Miss Louise Barry, Curator of Manuscripts, has obliged me with a copy.

Besides teaching phonography, young Kagi may have been continuing his study of law. Richard J. Hinton says (page 456): "Kagi was admitted to the bar somewhere in the West in the early part of 1856 at the age of twenty-one." Franklin Keagy (pages 325, 326) asserts that John studied law in Nebraska City; finished his course and was admitted to the bar. Dr. Martin R. Delany, in his autobiography published in 1868, telling of the Chatham convention of 1858, speaks of Kagi as "a young lawyer of marked talents and singular demeanor." [5]

Some of the names in the final paragraph of Kagi's letter above have a familiar sound. Among John Brown's men later were several Thompsons. "Fonsler" may have been one of Kagi's Fansler kinsmen. "Stearn" was probably George L. Stearns, a wealthy merchant of Boston, who was one of the first active free-soilers, and deeply interested in the contest for Kansas. According to Hinton's statement (page 139) Stearns did not meet Brown personally until December, 1856, but he was alert to happenings in the West from the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and before. It is not improbable that he got in touch with Kagi prior to December, 1855, through the latter's newspaper articles. It may be that Kagi wrote to him directly, as one well known in the abolition and free-soil movement.

James H. Lane and his family migrated to Kansas in April, 1855, locating near Lawrence.[6] Inasmuch as Nebraska City was an important station on the trail into Kansas that Lane soon thereafter laid out, we may conjecture that it was at Nebraska City that Kagi and Lane became acquainted. There is evidence, which will appear farther on, that Kagi was at Lawrence at some time prior to July 9, 1856.

Uncle Abe did not reach Bristolville, Ohio, about the first of June, 1856, as John expected. He reached his brother Jacob's (returning from California) on July 2; he and Mary

5. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, page 716.

6. See pages 11, 41, 42 of W. H. Stephenson's life of Lane, Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society, Vol. III, 1930.

This cabin was built by Allen B. Mayhew in or about 1853, at the site of Nebraska City. Mayhew's wife was Barbara, elder sister of John Henri Kagi, who, with John Brown, was here frequently. The cabin and the connected cave were a station on the "underground railroad." The cabin belongs (1958) to the estate of Edward Bartling. It is leased by Mrs. George C. Rowe and members of her family who have collected in it museum pieces and have refurnished it as a pioneer home. It is surrounded by an historical park.

left there for Ohio on August 12. In October of the same year he went to Nebraska, stopping first with the Mayhews at Nebraska City, but soon took up land on Camp Creek, eight or ten miles south, or southeast, of Nebraska City. The next year (1857) Mary went out to keep house for her father.

As shown by entries in the diary of my mother, Anna (Kagey) Wayland, no fewer than 62 letters were exchanged between Abraham Neff Kagey and his family, at Bristolville, Ohio, and elsewhere, and his brother, Jacob Kagey, and his family, in Shenandoah County, Virginia, between January 1, 1853, and August 30, 1855. Nearly half of these passed between John Henri and Anna. She received, within the same period, eight letters from John's sister Mary, four from his

father, and two from his sister Barbara, and sent them altogether in return fourteen. During much of this time John and Mary were in Virginia, when no letters, of course, were written to them; during the whole of it Uncle Abe was in California and Barbara at Nebraska City; and for the last five months of it John was also in Nebraska. Occasionally newspapers were exchanged, and once, September 10, 1853, Anna received John's "Likeness." What became of this "likeness", I do not know.

After 1855 very few letters, if any, were exchanged between the families for a number of years.

CHAPTER X

John Kagi in Kansas

Whether John Kagi went back from Nebraska to Ohio in the spring of 1856, as he said in his letter of December 24, 1855, he intended to do, I have not been able to ascertain. It does appear certain, however, that he was in Kansas, or planned to be there, in the early summer of 1856. The *Kansas Tribune*, published at Topeka, issue of July 9, 1856, contained a list of letters remaining in the postoffice at Lawrence on July 1, and among many others was one addressed to J. H. Kagi.[1] If he had intended to go to Lawrence and had directed his correspondents to address him there, but had not gone to Lawrence, he probably would have taken steps to have letters sent there forwarded to him. The conclusion is that he had been at Lawrence long enough, at some time prior to July 1, to receive mail there, and that at least one letter for him reached that place after he went elsewhere. The same newspaper, issue of August 18, contains two short articles signed "K."[2]

On September 4, 1856, at Topeka, Kagi wrote his father: "Just rec'd yr. letter of June 29, from Philadelphia.[3] . . . I have been in Kansas permanently for some three months." He states further that his father's letter had been received by his attorney, Jacob Safford, in Nebraska, who had drawn the money authorized and had paid some debts that Kagi owed there (in Nebraska). Evidently the letter had then been forwarded to Kagi at Topeka.

In his letter of September 4, 1856, from Topeka, Kagi says further:

"It will be unsafe to send the money by the mails, so I

1. See an incomplete file of the *Kansas Tribune* in the Library of Congress.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Written when A. N. Kagey was returning from California via New York and Philadelphia.

shall have to go up [to Nebraska] as soon as it will be safe to do so. At present no one can go alone any distance. Civil war rages here now in all of its horrors."[4] He gives many particulars.

On July 4, 1856, the free-soil "legislature," assembled at Topeka, was dispersed by United States troops under Colonel (later General) E. V. Sumner. Richard J. Hinton states that Kagi was a witness of this dispersal; that he at once actively identified himself with the free-state party, joining Company B of the 2d Regiment, Free-State Volunteers, under Aaron Dwight Stevens, then known as Colonel Whipple; and that he served in Whipple's regiment for one year. Franklin Keagy, the family historian, says that John was a member of Co. B, 2d Regiment of Kansas Volunteers, and participated in the border wars; that when he first went to Kansas he was with James Lane and engaged in reporting for some eastern papers.[5] Hinton says that Kagi was the regular correspondent of the *National Era*, Washington, D. C., the New York *Evening Post*, the *Kansas Tribune* at Topeka, and the *Republican* at Lawrence; and that he wrote a good deal also for the Chicago *Tribune*, the Cleveland *Leader* and the New York *Tribune*.[6] His letters to the *Evening Post* were signed "Kent."

On November 20, 1856, Kagi, in prison at Lecompton, wrote to one of his sisters—he had heard nothing from his father since the latter had left Bristolville for Nebraska—had had only one letter (the one written in Philadelphia) from him since he came home from California. He was expecting his father down (from Nebraska). "I am a Regular Correspondent," he said, "to the National Era."[7]

On May 21, 1856, Sheriff Jones, supported by a large pro-

4. This letter is in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka.

5. "John Brown and His Men", revised edition, pages 456, 457; "Kägy Relationship in America," page 326.

6. "John Brown and His Men", revised edition, page 458.

7. This letter is in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka.

slavery posse, went to Lawrence to arrest certain free-state leaders who had been indicted for treason. The arrest was accomplished without resistance; then Jones' men destroyed two free-state printing presses and the new free-state hotel.[8] Three days later, on Pottawatomie Creek, about 37 miles south of Lawrence, five pro-slavery men were taken from their beds, marched a short distance from their cabins, and killed with swords. This was the celebrated "Pottawatomie Massacre", perpetrated by seven men under the direction of John Brown, who had settled at Osawatomie the preceding October. Four of his sons, Owen, Frederick, Salmon, and Oliver, who had taken up land in the vicinity some months ahead of their father, with James Townsley, Theodore Weiner, and Henry Thompson, a son-in-law of Brown, made up the band of seven.[9] The village of Lane is near the scene of the slaying. On June 2, 1856, at Black Jack, about midway between Osawatomie and Lawrence, Brown and his supporters fought a band of pro-slavery men of Kansas and Missouri, defeated them and captured a number of them.[10] On August 30, 1856, several hundred pro-slavery men advanced upon the town of Osawatomie, killed Brown's son Frederick, captured the town in spite of a stubborn defense by Brown and a small force, and burned much of it.[11] On September 15, 1856, a large force of pro-slavery men approached Lawrence, burned the houses of a number of free-state men in the vicinity and threatened to destroy the town and "every abolitionist in the country", but were persuaded by Governor Geary to withdraw.[12]

These and other similar incidents that might be mentioned

8. See pages 68, 69, Stephenson's life of Lane, Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society, Vol. III, 1930.

9. See Hinton, pages 20, 63, 80, 664, etc.

10. See Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, Vol. XVI (1925), pages 524-28; "The Kansas State Historical Society and Department of Archives," 1928, page 10.

11. Hinton, pages 45, 604-06.

12. See page 82, Stephenson's life of Lane, Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society, Vol. III, 1930; Hinton, pages 45-53.

certainly justified Kagi's statement in his letter of September 4, 1856, that civil war was raging in all its horrors.

The imprisonment of Kagi and others at Lecompton must have taken place about September 20, 1856, or shortly before. Governor Geary was determined to put an end to revolutionary operations. Richard J. Hinton says that Kagi was arrested when he came to Topeka to report a speech that was to be made by Governor Geary, and places the date early in October. The time must have been a month earlier, for Kagi three days out of prison on December 20, wrote his father that he had been in three months to a day. He was under indictments, Hinton says, for highway robbery, arson, etc. The same writer declares that all these charges were frauds, and that Kagi was never brought to trial.[13] The purpose back of the indictments and arrest, Hinton asserts, was to stop Kagi's pen. If this was true, the machinations failed in their object, for a number of communications from him found their way into the columns of various newspapers. The *Kansas Tribune* (Topeka) of December 1, 1856, contains three letters written from the prison at Lecompton: one of Friday, October 24, signed "K"; another of the 25th, with the same signature; and the third of Monday, November 17, not signed, but evidently written by the same hand. Under date of October 24 the writer states that 99 "human beings" are in "this wholesale prison"—among them Kagi and Richey of Topeka. The correspondent ("K") on the 25th said that on the morning of that day Richey, Kagi, and McVowr had been called up for trial, but none of them having his witnesses ready, their cases were laid over. The writer on November 17 was evidently still in prison.[14]

The man whose building it was alleged Kagi had aided in burning was the jailer in charge at Lecompton,[15] and we may be sure that he did not put himself to any extra pains to make

13. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, pages 458, 459.

14. See an incomplete file of the *Kansas Tribune* in the Library of Congress.

15. Hinton, page 459.

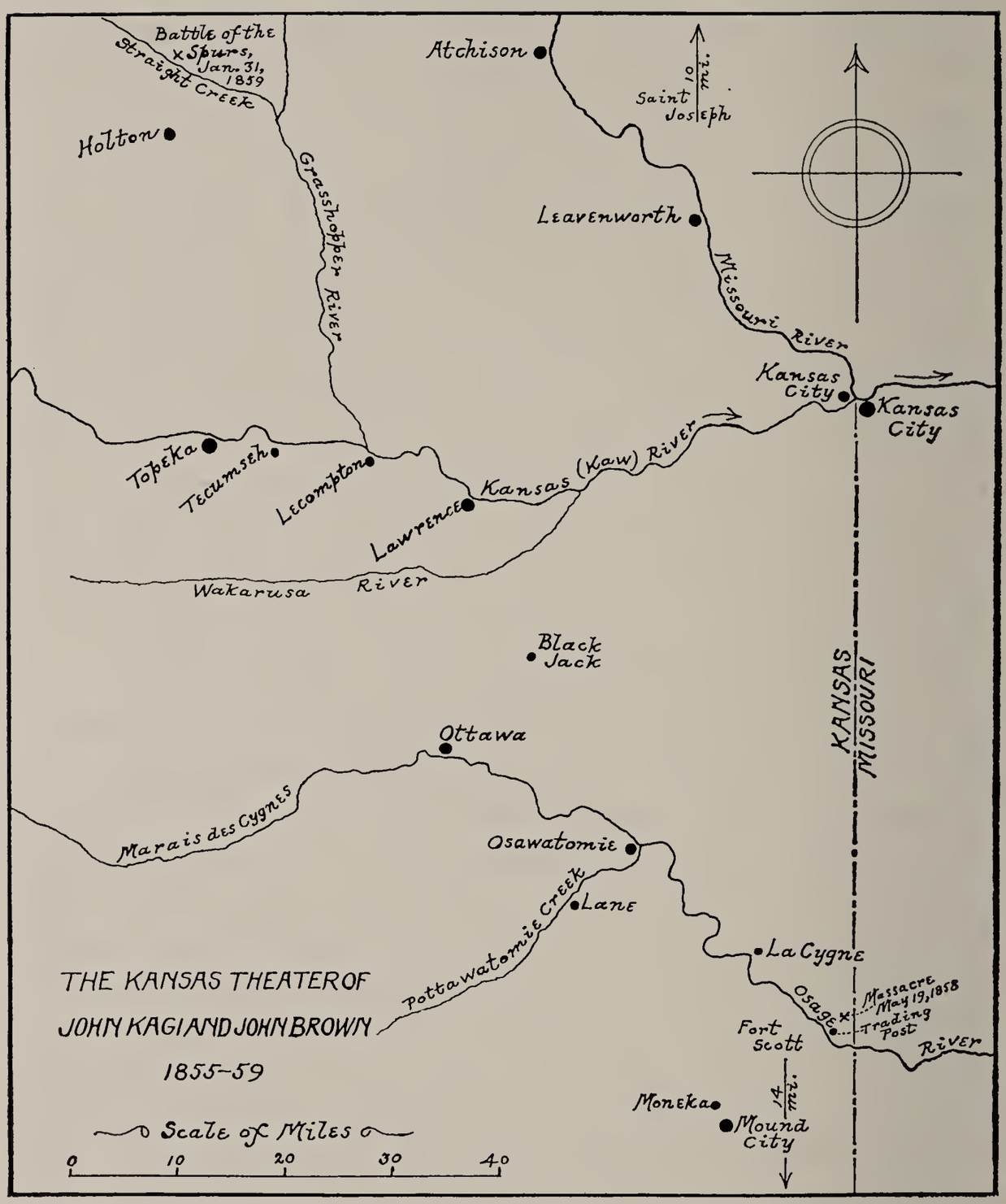
his charges comfortable. If Kagi had been incarcerated, as Hinton asserts, to stop his writing for the public press, efforts were no doubt made to prevent his sending out communications from prison. Hinton says that he resorted to all sorts of ingenious expedients to get his letters out of prison and properly mailed.[16] Franklin Keagy gives more details—that he would borrow a plug of tobacco from a comrade (Kagi himself did not use tobacco), hollow it out, insert his letter and cover it over with a leaf of the plug, and then manage to exchange the loaded plugs with some one from the outside who visited the jail.[17] Franklin relates other incidents. He says that on one of the marches of the "Volunteers" they, tired, footsore, and thirsty, came one day to a small town, where they paused to rest. Some of the "boys" of Kagi's company obtained some liquor and brought it into camp. When it was shared out Kagi took his portion and bathed his feet with it, saying that his stomach was all right, but his feet needed refreshment. Franklin says also that those imprisoned at Lecompton were taken to Tecumseh for trial, where Kagi was charged with murder for having killed one of Colonel Titus' men in battle. Kagi declared that at the time of the killing he had not yet entered the military service of his country, but he would probably have been convicted had it not been for the evidence of a woman and her boy, who testified for him. At another time when a plot was laid to assassinate him at a night session of the Lecompton "Legislature", which he was reporting with his usual free comments, his landlady gave him warning which kept him away from that particular session. According to Franklin, John at this time was the correspondent for several eastern papers and was associate editor of the Topeka *Tribune*.[18]

On Saturday, December 20, 1856, John wrote to his father: "I am at last free again—released on bail last Wed-

16. *Ibid.*

17. "Kägy Relationship in America," pages 326, 327.

18. *Ibid.*



nesday." He stated that he had been in prison three months to a day. He was needing money. His father was then at Nebraska City. On January 4, 1857, at Topeka, he wrote two letters that have been preserved, one (from the Garvey House) to his sister, probably Barbara Mayhew, at Nebraska City; the other (from the *Tribune* office) to his sister Mary, who was probably still in Ohio. In the latter he said: "I have already written to you once since my return from Prison, . . . A

week since I heard from father for the first time. . . . I think he will be down here in a week or two;" . . . In this letter he says that he had been in prison three months.

On Monday, January 26, 1857, John wrote his father stating that he had again been bailed out of prison—had been held only two hours. "Can you not come down?" [19] Uncle Abe was no doubt still at Nebraska City, with the Mayhews.

Regarding the releases from prison, the bail given, etc., I quote from Richard J. Hinton the following:

"In January [1857], his health failing him rapidly, he procured bondsmen and was admitted to $5000 bail. Judge Lecompte was glad to get rid of him. When the pro-slavery Constitutional Convention assembled soon after, in February 1857, Kagi came down to Lecompton to report its proceedings, and was almost immediately rearrested; giving this time bonds of $8000. All these charges were frauds, and were never brought to trial." [20]

Hinton along here is evidently about a month late with his dates, as will appear from Kagi's letters of December 20, 1856, and January 26, 1857; also from the report in the *Kansas Tribune* of February 2, 1857, of Kagi's encounter with Judge Elmore, given in out next chapter.

Possibly the pro-slavery leaders were not anxious to hold Kagi longer in prison. Hinton (page 460) submits the following quotation which he says is from a letter that Kagi wrote his sister while in prison at Lecompton:

"Our friends will take us out the moment I say so. A regiment, the same in which I was a lieutenant, will come to our rescue any night I give the order. I hesitate only because we may get out some other way, and a forcible rescue would bring on a fearful winter war, which I do not wish to see. Be cheerful!"

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19. The letters referred to above are in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka.

20. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, page 459.

On January 30, 1857, John at Topeka wrote to his father, at Nebraska City, that he was planning to start for Ohio.[21] Hinton speaks of his contemplated visit to Ohio, and that he planned to return west by way of the Missousi River; that he wished this plan to be kept "perfectly quiet", for his own safety. "I shall be compelled to go under an assumed name, as I am otherwise known all along the border and pro-slavery men would not hesitate to assassinate me." [22]

Possibly John's intention was to go back to Ohio to accompany his sister Mary to Nebraska; but if he did this it was later in the year. The day after he wrote his father on January 30, 1857, an incident occurred that served to interrupt his plans for at least a brief period.

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21. In the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society.

22. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, pages 459, 460.

CHAPTER XI

Encounter With Judge Elmore

In the *Kansas Tribune* (Topeka) of Monday, February 2, 1857, appeared the following interesting story:

A SHOOTING AFFRAY

Came off at Tecumseh, on Saturday of last week, between our Reporter, Mr. J. H. KAGI, and ex-Judge ELMORE: the latter considering himself aggrieved by some remarks of the former which were recently published in the TRIBUNE: and probably seeing that he could not successfully contradict the statements made by Mr. Kagi, in an argument, resorted to those particular friends of southern institutions, the cudgel and revolver, and he has proved himself equally unsuccessful in those.

The particulars of the affray as near as we can learn from those who were present, are:— That Saturday morning Mr. Kagi went to Tecumseh for the purpose of reporting the proceedings of a pro-slavery convention, which was to be held there on that day. The Judge and his emissaries had been on the lookout for their victim for several days, armed and equipped as modern chivalry directs. Previous to the hour set for the Convention to assemble, the Judge had taken his position on the Court House steps, to watch for the entrance of Kagi, who soon made his appearance, and in attempting to step up into the portico, Elmore raised a huge club which he had used as a walking stick, and at the same time accosting him with, "Your name is Kagi; are you a correspondent of the Kansas Tribune?" To which Kagi replied in the affirmative. He then asked if he wrote over the signature of K., and before he had time to reply, Elmore dealt him a heavy blow on the side of the head with his club, which sent him reeling for several rods. Elmore then fired and sought safety behind a pillar of the Court House. As soon as Kagi could bring himself to an upright position he drew a small four inch revolver which he happened to have with him, and fired, the ball passing through the lower part of the body and lodged in the thigh. From this time to the end of the affray, Mr. Kagi staggered hither and thither, attempting several times to bring his revolver to bear upon the Judge again, but the blow he had received caused utter blindness, so much so that he was unable to ascertain the exact whereabouts of the Judge, who continued to fire until he had spent four shots, when one of his

friends fired one from the window above, making five in all—the first one of which took effect in Kagi's right side, and must have proved fatal had not the ball passed through a large pocket blank book which he had with him for the purpose of taking notes, and a number of letters, all of which were in the breast pocket of his coat.

Judge Elmore has occupied a very prominent position in the Territory as an acknowledged leader of the Pro slavery party, and when such men can find no other arguments with which to combat the progress of liberal principles, it argues a degree of desperation in the cause of our opponents which we had hardly suspected.—Elmore has, however, never been backward in the manifestation of Border Ruffian instincts. The life of one of the editors of the Tribune has repeatedly been threatened by him during the recent campaign, and but a few days previous to the above affray, he was heard to declare that the "Tribune should be stopped." We understand that the Judge is in a critical condition from his wound; but should he be so fortunate as to recover, we would assure him, and all who may sympathize with him in his enmity towards us, that should he be so unfortunate as to be unable to master his passion, and attempt to execute any of his threats against our person or our property, he will always find us ready to act for the defence of either, with a degree of cheerfulness and alacrity which may astonish him.[1]

Tecumseh, where Elmore's assault upon Kagi took place, was a small town near Topeka, and by the "Border Ruffian" legislature had been made the county-seat of Shawnee County. Disturbances at Tecumseh were of frequent occurrence, due in large measure to its nearness to Topeka, which was a center of the free-state forces. It appears, however, that there were at least a few free-staters in Tecumseh, and on one occasion one of them was held up and robbed by a pro-slavery townsman. The law of force was the only one respected on either side, but some of the Topeka "boys" went to Tecumseh and proposed arbitration in the robbery case. A committee was appointed consisting of the accused and the accuser, with Judge Rush Elmore, a lawyer from Alabama, who had served for a brief period as one of the United States judges. The free-

1. A copy of this letter from the files of the *Kansas Tribune*, in the library of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka, was provided for the author in March, 1939, by the kindness of Miss Helen M. McFarland, Librarian.

John Henri Kagi and Lady Friend. John Henri Kagi, John Brown's "Secretary of War." Born at Bristolville, Trumbull County, Ohio, March 15, 1835; killed in the raid at Harper's Ferry, October 17, 1859. The name of the young lady is not known.

state man proved the loss of his goods and traced them to the hands of the accused. The burden of the decision fell on Elmore, who avoided the issue by declaring that he "could not tell"—was unable to decide as to the merits of the case. The goods were afterwards seized by the free-state friends of the accuser and restored to him, those acting announcing their responsibility for the action. Kagi, in a letter describing the incident, said:

"President Pierce need not have sought a pretext for dismissing Elmore, on account of his extra-judicial investments, as it was self evident that a person who could not decide a case

when the clearest evidence was given, whether a convicted robber should return stolen goods or retain them, was hardly qualified for a seat on the supreme bench of the Territory." [2]

It was these strictures and perhaps others of like character that infuriated Elmore and led him to attack Kagi. But the stroke of his cane and the bullet from his revolver did not disable Kagi's pen or blunt its point. The same issue of the *Kansas Tribune* (February 2, 1857) that carried the story given above contained the following:

A CARD

Rush Elmore, Esq., who attempted to carry matters with such a RUSH day before yesterday, will please accept the compliments of the "d—d abolition reporter," who is still alive, and who, while he continues to live, will endeaver to devote his humble efforts to the cause of freedom of the Press and speech here and elsewhere, and to Free Kansas. The "abolition reporter" thinks that the occurrence of Saturdav has entirely superceded the necessity of his offering any proof in support of his strictures upon the ex-Judge, one of which was to the effect that when asked, as a member of a committee appointed for that purpose, to disapprove of an act of highway robbery upon [a] free State man, he refused to give an opinion, from which but one thing could be inferred, which was that he was unable to judge whether stealing from free State men was right or wrong. Now there is not the least doubt that Mr. Elmore wishes to be considered a brave man, and to act courageously. And his attack upon a man whom he supposed to be entirely unarmed, first dealing him a crushing blow upon the head with a "Bully Brooks" bludgeon, and then dodging behind a pillar of the Court House to draw his revolver, shows that he is deficient in judgment as to what is bravery or cowardice; and from this deficiency it may reasonably be concluded that he MIGHT have erred, or been incapable of judging in the ROBBERY case. The weapons used—cane and revolver—his third shot at a man already twice wounded, and made senseless by the first blow, show too, what the ex-Judge WOULD have done at Lecompton, could he have but once taken his adversary unawares and unarmed.

Very respectfully,

K. [3]

2. "John Brown and His Men," Richard Hinton, revised edition, pages 460, 461.

3. From a file of the *Kansas Tribune* in the library of the Kansas State Historical Society, copy supplied by Miss Helen M. McFarland, Librarian.

On May 22, 1856, Preston S. Brooks had seriously beaten Senator Charles Sumner because of remarks he had made regarding Senator Butler of South Carolina in a speech on the "crime against Kansas." This incident gave the basis for Kagi's reference to a "Bully Brooks" bludgeon.

Of the injuries received by Kagi and Elmore, Richard J. Hinton has the following to say:

"One ball struck him [Kagi] in the breast, passing through a heavy memorandum book, and glancing made a severe wound in his left arm. The blood streaming from the wound in his head half blinded Kagi, who nevertheless, revolver in hand, advanced steadily on the burly and fugacious Alabamian, dodging round the pillar and firing wildly at his antagonist until the latter's only shot, penetrating the groin, laid him low. The lawyer lived, but the house of Elmore was ended by this incident. Kagi, however, never quite recovered from the effects of the blow on his head." [4]

Franklin Keagy gives the following account:

"Elmore was greatly incensed at these comments, and meeting Kägi in Tecumseh, as he was going up the court house steps, he said to him: "Are you the man who writes under the signture of K?' and being answered in the affirmative he immediately struck Kägi over the head with a heavy gold-headed cane, knocking him down. Stunned and half blinded by the brutal blow, he drew his revolver and shot the judge in the groin; the ball could not be extracted and he carried it to his grave. Several shots were exchanged between the parties. A ball from the Judge's pistol struck Kägi in the region of the heart, first passing through his coat and vest, then through a memoranda book an inch thick and glacing on a rib, passed around his body several inches, and lodged in his side. His friends took him to Topeka and there he removed the ball himself with a pen-knife." [5]

4. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, page 461.

5. "Kägy Relationship in America," pages 327, 328.

Although Kägi was not long disabled by the wounds he received, they may have caused him to give up the trip to Ohio which he contemplated when he wrote to his father from Topeka on January 30, 1857, the day before his fight with Elmore. On February 13, writing to his sister, he stated that he expected to leave "next Monday" for Nebraska City—he was not going to Ohio.[6] However, there may have been other reasons for his change of plans. William Elsey Connelley, in his history of the Lane Trail, recounts an incident of February, 1857, in which Kagi figured rather prominently. During this winter the Lane Trail became the "underground railroad" out of Kansas towards Canada. Early in February John Brown forwarded three slaves, guided by a man named Mills, to John Armstrong, in Topeka. Armstrong and Mills took them in a closed wagon northward from Topeka to the vicinity of Tabor, Iowa, via Holton and Powhattan, in Kansas, Falls City, Nemaha City, Peru, and Nebraska City, in Nebraska. This, we are told, was the first group of refugees taken out over the Lane Trail, and Kägi had been sent ahead to Nebraska City, where he was awaiting the party. Near there some pro-slavery men halted Armstrong, but the Negroes, who were hidden under a false bottom in the wagon, were not discovered. From Nebraska City Kägi conducted Armstrong and his party up the river to Civil Bend and there aided them to cross over into Iowa. To quote Connelley:

"The crossing was a dangerous matter, as ice was running in large pieces. The ferryman had to be persuaded with a Colt's navy before he would undertake the passage. The boat was carried down the river half a mile by the ice, but finally made the east shore in safety. The slaves were delivered to Dr. Ira D. Blanchard, who lived near Civil Bend on the Lane Trail, and a few miles from Tabor, Iowa. Kägi's father lived at the time in Nebraska City [with the Mayhews], and he also aided Armstrong to escape from the town with the slaves."[7]

6. This letter may be seen among the manuscripts of the Kansas State Historical Society.

7. "Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society," Vol. XIII, pages 269, 270.

CHAPTER XII

In and Out of Kansas

On March 3, 1857, Kagi wrote to his father from Topeka, reporting that high water in the Kaw (Kansas) River kept him from starting for Nebraska. If he had been at Nebraska City and Civil Bend in February, assisting Armstrong and the fugitive slaves, he had evidently returned to Topeka and was now planning another trip to Nebraska. The distance from Topeka to Nebraska City by way of the Lane Trail is about 120 miles, and winter traveling was more or less difficult. The question naturally arises whether the trek with the slaves might have been made in March instead of in February. Ice might have been running down in the Missouri River in March. At any rate, Kägi was at Nebraska City early in April. This appears from a letter he wrote to his father from Lawrence on April 14 in which he speaks of having been at Nebraska City a week before. In this letter he says: "Lane now has been all over the state with but 3 companions." On May 20 he wrote to his sister from Lawrence.[1]

Richard J. Hinton states (page 461) that Kagi's "lasting contact with John Brown" did not begin until October, 1857, when they met at Topeka. At that time Aaron D. Stephens (Colonel Whipple) also joined Brown and the party was formed "which went to school at Springdale, Iowa, to Chatham Canada, back to southern Kansas, thence to Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia—and Death." Hinton speaks also of a short visit that Kagi made to his father and sister at Camp Creek, Nebraska, soon after which he "joined the command."[2] This visit must have taken place, according to the foregoing statements, in the autumn of 1857. Uncle Abe (John's

1. These letters are preserved in the archives of the State Historical Society at Topeka.

2. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, page 156.

father) may have been living at Camp Creek by that time—he had come to Nebraska in the autumn of 1856—and his daughter Mary may have been with him at Camp Creek. According to the family tradition, she went from Ohio to Nebraska in 1857 to keep house for her father.[3] Mary, in 1862, was married to John O. Davis, but she and her husband appear to have lived with her father at Camp Creek until her death in 1869. Not long after that date Uncle Abe's older daughter, Mrs. Barbara (Mayhew) Bradway, moved in and lived there most of the time until her death in 1882. Uncle Abe continued to make his home at Camp Creek until 1885, when he moved away and took up a homestead on the prairie in Edwards County, Kansas, where he died in December, 1892, or January, 1893.

In December, 1857, John Brown led his "command" over the Lane Trail, by way of Nebraska City, Tabor, Iowa, and other places enroute, to Springdale in eastern Iowa, where the majority remained until April, 1858, studying the art of war and engaging in various recreational, literary, and political activities. Brown, himself, says Hinton (page 155), departed almost immediately for the East, leaving Aaron Dwight Stevens in charge as military instructor. Springdale, located a few miles east of Iowa City, had been settled by Quakers and was intensely anti-slavery. Its lyceums and debating clubs must have afforded pleasing diversions for Kagi, John Edwin Cook, and Richard Realf—perhaps others also—of Brown's party.

Before crossing the Missouri River from Nebraska to Tabor, Iowa, Kagi had stopped at least a short time at Nebraska City, the home of his sister Barbara and her husband, Allen Mayhew. This appears from a letter he wrote to his sister (probably Mary) from Springdale on December 29, 1857. He said:

"We have had a very long & tedious journey . . . . We should leave here early next week . . . . Do not for your life

3. "Kägy Relationship in America," page 325.

allow it to be known by anyone where I am, or what my business is, nor even that you know . . . . I rec'd your letter before leaving Neb. City."

When Kagi wrote to his sister (December 29, 1857), "We should leave here early next week," he was expecting that they would take the cars for Chicago. Iowa City at that time was the western terminus of the railroad. But if Brown and others did leave Springdale "next week" it appears certain that Kagi and most of the party remained. When first assembled at Springdale, according to Hinton (page 155), "the party consisted of John Brown himself, his son Owen, Aaron Dwight Stevens, John Henri Kagi, John Edwin Cook, Richard Realf, Charles Plummer Tidd, William Henry Leeman, Luke F. Parsons, Charles W. Moffett, with Richard Richardson, colored, eleven in all." This list agrees with the one given in his reminiscences by George B. Gill, who also was one of Brown's men, though not at Springdale, or not all of the time. He says that the party wintered at Mr. William Maxon's; that Kagi, Realf, and Cook "were more or less addicted to literary pursuits." [4]

Gill says further:

"Never before nor since, has that community been so mentally feasted as they were that winter. Realf, with fiery eloquence, would hold his audience spellbound; Kagi, with calm logical deductions would be invincible, and Cook would hold an intermediate position—comic, poetic, or mirthful, as the occasion demanded.

"While not noted in public debates, Owen Brown and Stevens were not to be despised in private discussion. Owen with his calm, orderly, and honest ways, Stevens with his fine rich voice, and passionate thoughts made life worth living in their boarding-house and all around them. Their boarding-house would sometimes remind one of a boiling, seething, roaring Vesuvius. A stranger would have supposed a battle imminent, but in a moment there would come a cheery, hearty

4. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, page 728.

laugh. They were earnest men, and as liberal towards others as they were positive in their own convictions . . . . It soon became an open secret that these men were waiting and preparing to strike a blow whose rebound would probably be death to the heroes that gave it . . . .

"In their home at Mr. Maxon's they amused themselves at intervals in singing. Several of them had superior voices, and when on some patriotic refrain would make the welkin ring. Mr. Maxon lived in the extreme west edge of Iowa Township, in Cedar County, and adjoining Springdale Township. The majority of the people in Iowa Township were as rabidly pro-slavery as they were intensely anti-slavery in Springdale Township. On learning the character of Mr. Maxon's borders, the pro-slavery citizens of Iowa held an indignation meeting and passed resolutions denying the fact of Mr. Maxon being a resident of Iowa Township, alleging that he was a citizen of Springdale Township. Mr. Maxon accepted the charge proudly. Brown paid one dollar per week to Mr. Maxon for each man boarded, a rate at which he probably lost money.

"The original intention was to familiarize themselves with military tactics and drill, but the instructor, [Colonel Hugh Forbes?] that they had expected had proven a failure in all ways. Stevens undoubtedly was very capable of instructing them in drill, but the original programme was never fully carried out, except in a mental way, by reading and discussing. This, however, was very thorough. Not alone, however, in military discipline and strategy, but in all things, theological or philosophical. No question too abstruse, none too prominent. Some genius among them, Owen Brown, whitled out some wooden swords with which they practiced. Whenever any one of them who had been accustomed to manual labor could get work to do, husking corn or similar labor, they would gladly seize hold of it." [5]

5. Idem, pages 729, 730. Hinton states that Mr. Gill's manuscript would be deposited with the Kansas State Historical Society.

Although I have not found Gil listed as one of those present at Springdale, I am of the opinion that he must have been there at least occasionally. His realistic descriptions sound like the words of an eye-witness. The vigor, hilarity, and boisterousness of the Springdale conferences are not surprising in view of the youthfulness of most of the enthusiasts. Owen Brown, the oldest, was only 33; Cook was 28 and Stevens 27; Tidd was 26, Kagi 23, and Leeman only 19.

On March 15, 1858, his birthday, Kagi writes from Springdale:

"My Dear Sister: I expect to leave this place on the 5th of April next. . . . Fear nothing; but observe care. . . . Only a little while, and success will displace Caution."

He expressed the belief that things were going well; signed himself "Maurice Maitland," and enclosed an envelope for his sister to use in writing to him. On March 23, place indefinite, he wrote to some one at Springdale.[6]

I quote again from George B. Gill:

"In April (1858) Brown returned from the East, and preparations for an advance forward were made, Parsons leaving Springdale in advance of the others in order that Parsons might visit his people, a few days, somewhere in Illinois. I should have said that Kagi and Tidd accompanied Parsons to his home there previous to the balance of the party leaving Springdale . . . . At 11:45 a. m., on Tuesday, April 27, 1858, we left Springdale for West Liberty, where we boarded the cars at three P. M., and crossed the Mississippi, at Davenport, just as the sun was setting. Our company then consisted of John Brown, Owen Brown, A. D. Stevens, Moffett, Taylor, Leeman, Realf, Cook, myself, and Richardson, a colored man. During the process of changing cars at Rock Island some demonstrations were made towards arresting our colored man as a 'runaway nigger.' We were speedily relieved of this by the conductor taking him by the arm and pushing him into

6. These letters are in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka.

the car and immediately starting the train. We were passing for a company of surveyors returning from the West.

"After starting, the conductor came around congratulating himself as to how nicely he had given them the slip. Arriving at Chicago at five o'clock on the morning of the 28th, we stopped at the Massasoit House. We ate our breakfast all right, but just previous to going into dinner the landlord informed the old patriarch that our colored man would have to wait and eat with the servants. The old man would not accept the proposition, but, instead, gave the landlord a little of his terse logic, and left. We dined at the Adams House, where the conditions were altogether suitable, caste and color, accidental and otherwise, not being considered. Leaving Chicago at 4:30 o'clock in the afternoon, we reached Detroit at 6 o'clock A. M. on the 29th, taking up quarters at the villa tavern; Parsons, Kagi, and Tidd arrived next day." [7]

From the foregoing it is evident that George B. Gill joined Brown's party at Springdale at some time before the departure from that place on April 27, 1858. Reference will be made farther on to Kagi's sojourn at the Parson's home in Illinois.

7. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, pages 730, 731.

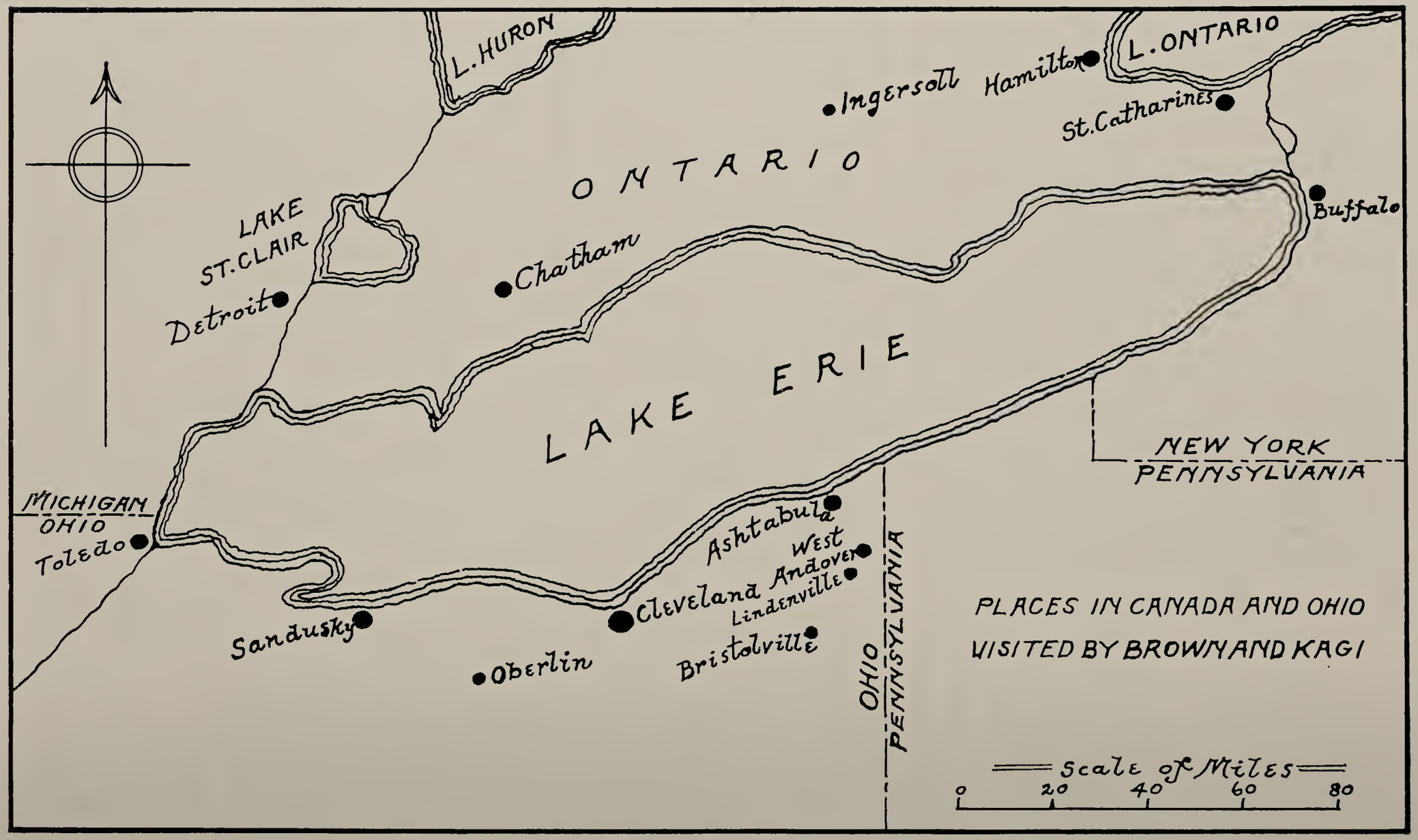
CHAPTER XIII

The Convention in Canada

After the arrival in Detroit, April 29, 1858, a week or so was spent without any notable action except the sending out of a few notes to various friends inviting them to a convention at Chatham, Ontario. Chatham is almost due east from Detroit, at a distance of about fifty miles. In the early part of April John Brown had visited St. Catharines, Ingersoll, Hamilton, and Chatham, in Canada, preparing his friends in those localities for the convention he proposed to hold before he entered upon his outright work.[1] In and around Chatham were a number of Negroes resident under the British flag, most of whom had been fugitive slaves. By some estimates there were as many as 75,000 such refugees in Canada West at this time. Among them were Martin R. Dulany, a physician, editor, and ethnologist; Isaac Holden, a surveyor and civil engineer; Rev. William Charles Munroe; William Perry Anderson, a free Negro, a printer by trade; and Harriet Tubman, the "Moses" of her people, who was very active and efficient in the operation of the "underground railroad," which usually approached Canada by way of Cleveland, Sandusky, or Detroit. Harriet, by John Brown, was termed "General Tubman." Brown was expecting much from the Negroes of Canada when he once launched his open campaign.

A preliminary meeting was held in the home of Isaac Holden in Chatham, and on May 8 the convention was opened in the Baptist church of which Rev. W. C. Munroe was pastor. Of the forty-six persons present, only twelve were white men. Munroe was made chairman and John H. Kagi was elected secretary. During two days about fifteen hours were devoted to the work in hand, which consisted mainly in discussing and ratifying the "Provisional Constitution and Ordinance for the

1. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, page 170.


L. HURON
L. ONTARIO
Hamilton
Ingersoll
St. Catharines
ONTARIO
Buffalo
LAKE ST. CLAIR
Chatham
Detroit
LAKE ERIE
NEW YORK
PENNSYLVANIA
MICHIGAN
OHIO
Toledo
Ashtabula
West Andover
Cleveland
Linderville
Sandusky
Oberlin
Bristolville
OHIO
PENNSYLVANIA
PLACES IN CANADA AND OHIO
VISITED BY BROWN AND KAGI
Scale of Miles
0 20 40 60 80

People of the United States" which Brown and his close advisors had drawn up.[2]

The journal of the convention, kept and signed by Kagi, shows that Owen Brown was elected treasurer under the constitution, George B. Gill secretary of the treasury, and John H. Kagi secretary of war. The election of a president was postponed. Gill states that John Bown was recognized as commander-in-chief and Richard Realf elected secretary of state.[3]

After the convention adjourned on May 10 John Brown went to New England; Owen Brown went to visit his brother Jason at Akron, Ohio; Cook went to Cleveland and soon thereafter to Harper's Ferry; Realf went to New York and thence to England; Gill and Tidd got employment at or near Lebanon, Ohio; Steward Taylor went to Illinois; Parsons and Moffett spent some time in northern Ohio, then departed for Iowa; Leeman took up some work in Ashtabula County, Ohio. Kagi went to St. Catharines, where he set up the proceedings of the Convention, including the commissions, in the printing shop of the Negro, James Bell, Kagi doing the work himself.[4] He had probably learned something about printing at the office of the *Kansas Tribune* in Topeka.

On May 13, 1858, at St. Catharines, Kagi wrote a letter to his "dear Friend Charlie," saying that he had arrived there "day before yesterday." The letter is signed "Kagi," and it may be seen in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka. A speculation as to who "Charlie" was cannot proceed with much assurance—he may have been Charles Plummer Tidd, Charles W. Moffett, or "Charles Whipple" (Aaron D. Stevens), all of whom had been with Kagi at the Chatham convention a few days before; or he may have been Charles W. Lenhart (Leonhardt), a Polish gentleman from Posen, Prussia, distinguished as a soldier in Europe, who had come to America with Kossuth.[5]

2. *Idem,* pages 178, 179, 619-637.
3. *Idem,* pages 185, 634-637.
4. *Idem,* page 732.
5. See "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, pages 253, 254

Two days after Kagi wrote the above-mentioned letter to "Charlie," he wrote another one, as follows:

St. Catharine's Canada,
Saturday, May 15th, 1858

Friend Adda:—

The date of this letter would, no doubt surprise you, had you not ere this received letters from Luke, explaining much, though, perhaps, not all. It was hard for me, as I also know it was for him, to deceive you; but will not the circumstances more than justify us both? I think so; and will doubtless do the same, ultimately, if not now. All depends upon caution, and how ever cautious you and your friends may have been, yet walls sometimes have ears (on the outside) and therefore communications of that kind made too early, even to the dearest friends, not directly connected therewith, might be followed by deplorable results. How much your brother may have told you I know not,—enough, probably, however, to enable you to know that our destination was not what we professed it to be. Yet why should you mourn? You will see him sooner than if it had been as we represented, and with honors sufficient to recompense you for his absence. He will also pass through less of danger, however daring it may appear to others.

Luke left me while at Chatham, C. W., on Tuesday, and proceeded to Cleveland, O., by way of Detroit. I came on here two days ago. I shall remain until next week sometime, and then pass on by way of Niagara Falls and Buffalo, to join Luke at C. This city is the finest in the Province, and is located 20 ms. from the Falls.

I need not say that I shall be glad to hear from you—any of you, for this is to all.—I will receive any letters addressed to Lindenville, Ashtabula Co., Ohio. Do not take offence when I say that much discretion should be used in writing. All allusions to important matters should be figurative as letters are subject to abstraction from the mails.

With the highest respects to all, together with many thanks to your family for the kind hospitality which they have shown me,
I remain the sincere friend of yourself and brother.

J. H. Kagi.

P. S. I hope Hellen will not forget me, should you write. K.[6]

The foregoing letter was evidently addressed to a sister of

6. I am indebted to the kindness of Miss Louise Barry, Curator of Manuscripts, for a copy of this letter, the original of which is in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka.

Luke F. Parsons. It will be recalled that Kagi and Tidd had left Springdale, Iowa, in April, preceding, ahead of Brown and the majority of his party, to go with Parsons to visit his family somewhere in Illinois. Adda and Hellen were both probably sisters of Parsons. Parsons, Kagi, and Tidd overtook Brown and the others at Detroit on April 30.

Kagi in his letter to "Adda" states that he was going from St. Catharines, by way of Niagara Falls and Buffalo, to Cleveland, Ohio, but indicates that he would stop for some time in Ashtabula County, Ohio. Lindenville, in Ashtabula County, is only about fifteen miles from Bristolville, his old home, in Trumbull County. According to the understanding when the Chatham convention broke up, Kagi and Stevens were to wait at Cleveland for Brown, on his return from New England. This they evidently did.[7] Kagi, in a letter that he wrote from Lawrence, Kansas, on June 28, speaks of having recently been at Cleveland.

7. Hinton, revised edition, page 198.

CHAPTER XIV

Final Operations in Kansas

It seems probable that John Brown had intended to launch his military adventure at Harper's Ferry soon after the adoption of his constitution at Chatham, but various conditions and incidents induced him to delay. For one thing, there were divisions and disputes among his supporters, especially in New England; but one of the most potent influences came from an incident in Linn County, Kansas: the Marais des Cygnes massacre, which took place on May 19, 1858.

A band of twenty-odd pro-slavery men, under the leadership of three Hamilton brothers from Georgia, came over the line from Missouri, following the south side of the Osage (Marais des Cygnes) River to the ford one mile south of Trading Post, where they crossed the stream. At Trading Post and other places in the neighborhood they collected eleven free-state men whom they took to a ravine several miles northeast of Trading Post, and half a mile from the state line, for assassination. In the ravine the eleven men were lined up, north and south, facing the east, with their captors in another line close in front of them. Beginning at the north, the victims stood in this order: Charles Snyder, Thomas Stillwell, Patrick Ross, Rev. B. L. Reed, Asa Hairgrove, Amos Hall, William Hairgrove, William Robertson, Austin Hall, William Colpetzer, and John Campbell.

Just before Captain Charles Hamilton gave the order to fire young John Campbell, at the foot of the line, said, "Now, if you will shoot, take good aim." The order was given, fire flashed forth, and all the eleven fell, Thomas Stillwell, Patrick Ross, William Robertson, William Colpetzer, and John Campbell killed; Charles Snyder, Asa Hairgrove, Amos Hall, William Hairgrove, wounded. Rev. B. L. Reed and Austin Hall were unhurt, but they feigned death. The assassins turned

and galloped off a short distance, then several of them came back to take another look at their victims. They seemed anxious to make certain of killing Mr. Reed, but mistook Patrick Ross for him. After one of them had shot Patrick Ross through the brain with a pistol, the whole party rode away.[1]

James Montgomery, "the fighting radical of southern Kansas," with several companions, rode hard to overtake the Hamiltons, but without success. No effective measures were taken by the authorities either in Kansas or in Missouri to apprehend them. John Brown felt that his work in Kansas was not done.

Brown, Kagi, and Tidd reached Kansas about June 24th. On the 25th Brown and Kagi were at Lawrence, so says Hinton. On Monday, June 28, Kagi wrote from Lawrence to his sister: "I have just arrived—will leave in a few minutes." He had received letters from her and his father while in Cleveland. He continued: "Shall do all in my power to raise some means for father, but I will not raise your hopes to have them fall again. What I have already lost and sacrificed will sometime return to me." [2]

This letter shows much haste in writing. I heard my father and mother say that Uncle Abe went to California to make money to pay off a debt—sent money back to John to pay the debt; John used the money in abolition activities. His statement in the above letter seems to harmonize with these reports.

Hinton says (page 212) that on June 27th John Brown and John Kagi left Lawrence for Osawatomie. It was probably on the 28th, as appears from Kagi's letter to his sister. From Osawatomie Brown went down into Linn County and established a post on the quarter section of land where the massacre of May 19 had taken place. Under the name of Shubel

1. "Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society," Vol. XIV, pages 208-215; "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, pages 194-197.

2. See this letter in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka.

Morgan he organized a company of fourteen men, among whom were J. H. Kagi, C. P. Tidd, James Montgomery, Augustus Wattles, and William Hairgrove. We are told that Owen Brown, Aaron D. Stevens, William H. Leeman, and George B. Gill were also with him at times.[3] Brown most of the time aimed at exercising a protective and reassuring role among the excited settlers in the region of the Hamilton (Marais des Cygnes) massacre.

On August 13, 1858, Kagi wrote from Moneka to his "Dear Sister, father, & others." He stated that some had gone to Harper's Ferry and declared, "We are all ready and in good spirits."[4]

Moneka is a village a mile or two northwest of Mound City, the county-seat of Linn County, and not more than twelve or fifteen miles from Trading Post and the site of the Hamilton massacre. At Moneka was the home of Augustus Wattles, aged 51, a native of Connecticut. He was a zealous abolitionist and had had a notable career as an educator and colonizer of Negroes in Ohio and other states. In 1854, when Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, he said, "That is to give the South a chance for another slave state. We will go to Kansas." From 1854 to 1856 he and his family lived near Lawrence, then moved to Moneka. In the "Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society," Volume XVII, pages 290-299, in an interesting sketch of the life and work of Mr. Wattles by Mrs. O. E. Morse, of Mound City.

Of Brown and his men in Linn County, Hon. Joel Moody wrote:

"When the old warrior, John Brown, heard in his quiet retreat in Canada of the Hamelton raid on the Marais des Cygnes, he at once set out for his former field of operations in Kansas. He reached here June 25, 1858. Soon after he visited Osawatomie, his old place of rendezvous, then passed

3. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, pages 212, 644.

4. This letter is in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society.

down to Linn county and stayed some time with Colonel Montgomery at his home west of Mound City, and also with Augustus Wattles, about two miles north of Mound City. He had long known Mr. Wattles and frequently communicated with him by letter. He then visited Valley township and the place of the massacre and soon made up his mind what to do. It was to stay and protect the citizens there who lived in dread and nightly expected to be murdered or driven off. He made a contract with one of the Snyders for the possession of the quarter section of land on which the massacre took place, which was about a half mile from the Missouri state line, and settled there close at the door of the ruffians. Here he erected what is known in history as John Brown's fort, but which he named Fort Snyder, after one of the Marais des Cygnes victims, Asa Snyder. It was the spot where the blacksmith Eli Snyder lived and worked. . . . It was at this time [July, 1858] that John Brown enrolled his company to defend the border." [5]

Mr. Moody then names the members of the "Shubel Morgan" company, as follows: Shubel Morgan, C. P. Tidd, J. H. Kagi, A. Wattles, Samuel Stevenson, J. Montgomery, L. Wiener, Simon Snyder, E. W. Snyder, Elias J. Snyder, John H. Snyder, Adam Bishop, William Hairgrove, John Mikel, and William Partridge. Evidently the membership of this company varied somewhat from time to time. Hinton names Aaron D. Stevens, William H. Leeman, and George B. Gill, also, as belonging to the Shubel Morgan company.[6]

On September 23, 1858, Kagi, at Lawrence, wrote to his "Dear Sister and Father." He referred to their "destitute condition," but declared that the success of a "great cause" was drawing near. "I am collecting arms &c. belonging to J. B. so that we may command them at any time . . . . Address me at Moneka, Kansas, care of A. Wattles. I shall leave here [Lawrence] to day." [7]

5. "Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society," Vol. XIV, pages 220, 221.

6. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, page 212.

7. This letter is in the files of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka.

During the fall and early winter, 1858, Kagi was with James Montgomery a good deal. Montgomery was a native of Ashtabula County, Ohio, which borders on the north the county of Trumbull, Kagi's native county. In Volume XIII, "Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society," is an interesting article on "Colonel Montgomery and His Letters." Montgomery in the Civil War commanded a regiment of South Carolina Negroes.[8] During the border troubles preceding that conflict he was a leading champion of the free-state men in southeastern Kansas. Several times his cabin was attacked, once in the beginning of November, 1858. This time Kagi was a guest there and assisted in the successful defense.[9]

On December 16, 1858, Montgomery and Kagi participated in a notable incident at Fort Scott, which is located in Bourbon County, the next one south of Linn County. Quoting from Hinton: "The Fort Scott pro-slavery policy culminated on the 25th of November in the arrest and chaining of a farmer named B. M. Rice, under charge of murder, but whose real offense was giving, as alleged, information to Capt. James Montgomery."[10] On December 16th Montgomery, Kagi, and others led a band to Fort Scott to rescue Rice, which they succeeded in doing. A. H. Tannar, of Mapleton, Bourbon County, who was a member of the rescue party, later wrote as follows:

"No one would have been hurt except for the foolhardiness of Deputy Marshal John Little. He kept the old sutler's store and was staying there with George A. Crawford. As the posse passed by his store he opened the door and fired at short range into the crowd with No. 2 buckshot, wounding Ben Seaman and J. H. Kagi, a German military officer, afterwards hung at Harper's Ferry with John Brown. After the shot Little went to a side door and looked out through a transom,

8. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, page 644.

9. *Idem,* page 216.

10. *Idem,* pages 216, 217.

and being noticed by a member of the posse, received a bullet from a Sharp's rifle and was instantly killed." [11]

Edward D. Bartling, of Nebraska City, reports a statement to the effect that the shot which killed Blake (John?) Little was fired by Kagi.[12] The killing of Little was called murder by the pro-slavery folk, by the other side, self-defense.

Brown did not participate at Fort Scott, but in the latter part of the same month (December, 1858) and in January following he and his company struck their last blow for freedom on the Missouri-Kansas border. On Sunday following the rescue at Fort Scott, George B. Gill, scouting along the line, met a Negro, Jim Daniels, who, ostensibly, was selling brooms. Finding that Gil was a free-state man, Daniels told him that he was seeking help. He said that he, his wife, and children were soon to be sold by their owner, Hicklan, over in Missouri. On Sunday night, December 20th, Brown and Aaron D. Stevens led two small parties over into Missouri and rescued Daniels and his family, with other slaves from different places. A Mr. Cruise, who attempted to shoot Stevens, was shot and killed by the latter.[13]

Eleven Negroes were brought over into Kansas on this raid. They were first brought to the home of Augustus Wattles at Moneka. From here the next night they were taken to the home of a Dr. Gilpatrick at Greeley, in the northeastern corner of Anderson County, where they were kept in hiding for a month. A sheriff and posse from Missouri scoured the country from the Osage up to the Kaw, but without finding the fugitives.[14]

After the hunt died down, Brown and his men took the Negroes northward through Topeka and Holton to Nebraska City, and thence through Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan to Detroit, whence they were carried to Windsor, Ontario. A

11. "Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society," Vol. XIV, page 231.
12. "John Henry Kagi and the Old Log Cabin Home," 1940 edition, page 22.
13. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, Revised edition, pages 218-221.
14. "Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society," Vol. XVII, page 298.

few miles above Holton, on January 31, 1859, at Straight Creek, Marshal John P. Wood and a posse confronted the convoy and several spirited skirmishes took place, but Brown and his party succeeded in going ahead. The action at Straight Creek is known in Kansas history as the "Battle of the Spurs," the name being suggested, no doubt, by the fast riding of the participants.[15]

Approaching Nebraska City, George B. Gill, one of Brown's party, fell behind and came near to being captured by three pro-slavery scouts. When he reached the town, "Our folks," he says, "had then crossed on the ice and passed on. I stopped over night with Kagi's brother-in-law, Mr. Mayhew."[16] Kagi himself, as will appear below, had a narrow escape at Nebraska City. On February 7, 1859, from Tabor, Iowa, where the party halted from the 5th to the 11th, Kagi wrote a letter to "Friend Phillips," in which he tells about the "Battle of the Spurs" and of his escape at Nebraska City. "Friend Phillips" was evidently Colonel Williams A. Phillips, one of Brown's supporters in Kansas, who later placed Kagi's letter (below) in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society.

"We are here [at Tabor] with the fugitives. After I joined J. B. we started North. The posse thought we were going to attack them in their quarters, and took to the crossing of Spring Creek (above Holton) & hitched horses. We came on, and they left; and took up another position, and still another. Finally, finding that we still came on in utter disregard of them, they broke and ran for Mo. We caught five of them and took from them their horses and revolvers, and kept the men until the next day. They thought there had been advantages on both sides—we getting some good horses and arms; and they some *valuable experience.* The N. Dept. Marshal was J. N. O. P. (&c) Wood. One of our men chased six of

15. See "Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society," Vol. XV, pages 598, 599, "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, page 224.

16. Hinton, revised edition, page 225.

Franklin Keagy the oldest son living of Rudolph Keagy, who was the son of Rudolph Keagy, who was the son of Abraham Keagy, who was the son of Hans or John Kagy, who was the first of the name in this country, and who came over in the year 1715 from Switzerland. Hans or John Kagy had four sons Jacob, Abraham, Henry and Rudolph. The two last named went to Virginia in about 1768. Photo about 1890. Franklin wrote the Kagy Family History.

them 8 m. towards Atchison. The Dept. Marshal for S. Nebraska with a small posse attempted to take me at Neb. City, when alone at my sisters, but couldn't do it. While he was securing a larger posse I escaped."

Signed "Kagi."

Edward D. Bartling says that at this time Kagi visited his

sister (Mrs. Allen Mayhew), and that at some time during the night while he was asleep in the cabin his horse was stolen or seized by officers. Bartling also relates that on one occasion when Kagi was at the Mayhew home officers came to arrest him; that Mayhew went out and they asked him whether Kagi was there. "Yes," replied Mayhew, "he is upstairs in the log house and has a Sharp's rifle and plenty of ammunition. You can take him, but I want you to wait until I get my family away from here, and then you may do as you please." Upon this the officers withdrew—perhaps to get reinforcements.[17] This incident may be the one to which Kagi refers in the above letter to Phillips.

George B. Gill states that while Brown, his men, and the fugitive slaves were stopping at Tabor, Iowa, February 5-11, 1859, meetings were held denouncing Brown, his party, and their actions; at the same time Tabor was the starting-point for free-state movements in western Iowa and the people there (the majority, probably) continued to give aid to the convoy.[18]

Leaving Tabor on February 11th, Brown and his party set out for Springdale, in the eastern part of the state. About noon on the 18th they reached Des Moines, traveling with two teams and several riding horses. In the city they stopped for some time in the streets, and while there Kagi hunted up Editor Teesdale, of the *Register,* an acquaintance of his. He also proved to be an acquaintance (and a friend) of Brown, and paid the ferriage for the party across the Des Moines River. Grinnell was reached on the 20th. There the party was enthusiastically received and was entertained for two days. Two night meetings were held, with a full house each time. Brown and Kagi spoke and were loudly cheered. Memoranda left by Brown show that the whole party and teams were kept for both days free of charge; sundry article of clothing were given to the fugitives; bread, meat, cake, pies, &c., were prepared to be

17. "John Henry Kagi and the Old Log Cabin Home," 1940 edition, pages 22, 23, 31.

18. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition page 225.

carried on the journey; and cash contributions amounting to $26.50 were made up.[19]

On the 25th Brown and his company reached Springdale, Iowa, and on March 12th the fugitives were safely carried over from Detroit, Michigan, to Windsor, Canada. Thus ended their long trek from the Missouri-Kansas border.[20]

It has been said that James H. Lane went to Kansas with the intention of organizing the Democratic party there with a view to receiving political preferment at its hands;[21] also, that the peril of John Brown's sons and their families, together with the growing opportunity for attacking slavery, led him to Kansas.[22] Without doubt, many from both camps—anti-slavery and pro-slavery—went seeking objects that were personal: financial profit, political preferment, or what not; but so far I have not found any indication that John Henri Kagi went for any personal benefit that he expected or hoped to receive. In other words, I believe that his motives were chiefly altruistic and patriotic. At the same time he was no doubt attracted to Kansas by the conflict that was being waged there between his friends and their foes—he must have had a good deal of the fighting spirit.

19. *Idem*, page 226.

20. *Idem*, pages 226, 227

21. "The Political Career of General James H. Lane," by W. H. Stephenson, Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society, Vol. III, 1930, page 42.

22. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, page 67.

Harper's Ferry much as it appeared at the time of John Brown's Raid looking down the Potomac from the right (Virginia) side. At this time the railroad ran alongside the river. The U. S. Armory buildings were just back of it. From a halftone engraving published many years ago by the B. & O. Railroad Company.

CHAPTER XV

In Northern Ohio Again

In March, 1859, at Detroit, to which place Brown, Kagi, and others had conducted the fugitives from the western border of Missouri, Brown met Frederick Douglass, who was there for a lyceum lecture, and had a conference with him. Then Brown, accompanied by his son Owen, Kagi, Stevens, Leeman, Tidd, Hazlett, Edwin Coppoc, J. G. Anderson, and Barclay Coppoc, went to Cleveland, Ohio. Steward Taylor was working in Illinois and awaiting orders. John E. Cook was already at Harper's Ferry, spying out the land.[1]

In Cleveland, on March 23d, Brown disposed of his horses and mules, and probably his two wagons, by public sale in the street, he himself acting as auctioneer. From this sale he realized several hundred dollars. The following evening a meeting was held in Chapin's Hall, a small admission fee being charged. To the good-sized audience present Brown explained that he made the charge towards reimbursing him for the expenses of the recent trip from Kansas with the fugitives from Missouri. The speakers of the evening were Kagi and Brown, in this order. Hinton states that he copied his report from the Cleveland *Leader*, which evidently printed a rather full account. Kagi went over in rapid review a history of events in southeastern Kansas of the past few years, emphasizing the border-ruffian outrages of 1856, the persecutions suffered by the free-state settlers, and the failure of those in legal authority to give protection or enforce justice. His account of atrocities culminated with a description of the massacre in Linn County the preceding May by the Hamilton gang. Hinton says: "Kagi was a strong, logical, convincing, even eloquent, speaker, with a fine presence and a good command of language.

1. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, page 228.

He knew the subject, and did not seek either to evade or defend the actions of free-state men. He simply showed what they were and how they came to be, leaving his audience to decide the ethics thereof. Kagi's description of the one-sided fights, ending in the Southerners' flight, were amusing and pleased the audience." [2]

The "one-sided fights" referred to were probably those in the "Battle of the Spurs," January 31, 1858, which took place as Brown's company was conducting the fugitives northward towards Nebraska.

Brown, in his address, spoke of his various operations and experiences, showing that although he had been much threatened during his recent sojourn in Kansas he had not been engaged in any fight. He declared that his purpose in liberating the Missouri slaves was to make conditions familiar and to strike a blow at bondage. He considered it his duty to liberate the slave wherever he had an opportunity. He was now an outlaw, with a price on his head, but grimly remarked that if any attempt was made to take him he "should settle all questions on the spot." [3]

After visiting his son John at West Andover and Jason at Akron, both in Ohio, Brown, with J. G. Anderson, left for his home at North Elba, New York. Other members of the party distributed themselves in various places in northern Ohio and in Pennsylvania. Kagi, during the next two or three months, divided his time at Cleveland, West Andover, and Oberlin, looking after shipments of arms, etc., from Iowa to Conneaut, Ohio, and watching the progress of a case in which a number of prominent persons at Oberlin were involved, they having given protection to Price, an alleged fugitive slave. Several of those charged with having participated in the rescue of Price from the slave-catchers were imprisoned at Cleveland. Kagi and Tidd, with others, planned to take them out of jail, but before they made an attempt to do so the case broke down.

2. *Idem,* pages 233, 234.
3. *Idem,* pages 234, 235.

Those who came to testify against the prisoners were arrested on the charge that the capture of Price was in reality a kidnaping. The fugitive and the rescuers were discharged and the accusers withdrew.

Kagi at this time was a correspondent for the New York *Tribune* and wrote also for the Cleveland *Leader*.[4]

It has been noted that Kagi was occasionally at West Andover. This is a village near the southeastern corner of Ashtabula County, Ohio, and not far from the line of Trumbull County. Aaron D. Stevens was working on a farm for a Mr. Lindsey at or near West Andover. William H. Leeman had a job in a whip factory at Lindenville, which is between West Andover and the Trumbull County line. Thus it will be seen that Kagi was in easy touch with different members of Brown's company.

Inasmuch as West Andover and Lindenville are so near to Bristolville, and Cleveland not far away, we may conjecture that Kagi within this period visited the scenes of his boyhood in Trumbull County. It was probably at this time or the spring of 1858—see Chapter XIII—that he learned of the marriage which is said to have wrecked his romance. I quote here from Franklin Keagy:

"After the close of the difficulties in Kansas, John Henry Kagi returned to Bristol, O. He had made the acquaintance of a young lady (a teacher, I am informed), to whom he seemed greatly attached before he went to Nebraska. A correspondence was begun and kept up for some time, but though the changing of his address so frequently the correspondence ceased, and the lady thinking she was forgotten, received the attentions of another man and married him.

"When Kagi returned to Bristol and learned that his 'sweetheart' was wedded it is said that he was greatly disappointed and declared that 'Now he didn't care what became of him.' He returned to Kansas and with John Brown engaged

4. *Idem*, pages 236, 237.

Looking downstream upon the confluence of the rivers at Harper's Ferry. The Potomac comes down from the left, the Shenandoah from the right. The highway bridge over the Shenandoah, at the right, and the lower one over the Potomac were washed down in the flood of March 1936. This photograph was made in 1924. A few years later the railway company erected a third bridge across the Potomac, farther upstream, the western end of which covers much of the old armory area. Since 1936 the second bridge, the upper one in this picture, has been used for autos as well as for occasional railway trains.

in running off slaves from Missouri into Iowa and thence to Canada."[5]

The final sentence above indicates that Kagi was at Bristolville in the spring or early summer of 1858, when he came around Lake Erie from St. Catharines, by way of Buffalo, following the convention at Chatham, Ontario. (See Chapter XIII.)

The picture of Kagi reproduced herewith represents him and some young lady, supposed to be the sweetheart referred to above. This picture was made, in all probability, in 1854 shortly before Kagi paid his second visit to Virginia, after which he went directly to Nebraska. He was at that time (1854) aged nineteen. What became of the "likeness" that my mother received from him (by mail) on September 10, 1853, I do not know. Another picture of John that I have seen represents him as much older than he appears in this one, and I am of the opinion that the aging is due to some retouching that was done to the original. His age when he was killed at Harper's Ferry was only twenty-four years and seven months.

We may wonder why Brown, a man of fifty-nine, was surrounded in his dangerous undertakings by men who were, in most cases, under thirty, and that he, apparently, gave his fullest confidence to Kagi, who was one of the youngest. Hinton relates how Kagi, in the summer of 1858, under Brown's direction, revealed to him (Hinton) that Harper's Ferry was to be the point of attack. Up to that time, apparently, Brown had told this to no one but Kagi.[6] John E. Cook, in the statement he wrote out following his arrest after the raid, said that Kagi was next to Brown in command.[7] Cook was five years older than Kagi, and a man of ability. Stevens was four years older than Kagi, and had had a rather wide experience in military operations.

5. "Kägy Relationship in America," page 330.

6. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, pages 670-76.

7. *Idem*, page 712.

We may conclude that Brown recognized his need of youthful vigor and daring in his hazardous enterprise. He did not want to be hampered by the conservatism and protests of older men. He probably depended especially on Kagi because of his unwavering and unquestioning loyalty to him (Brown) and his whole-souled devotion to the cause. Besides, Kagi, of all of Brown's immediate followers, was perhaps the one with the greatest natural endowments and the best educational qualifications.[8] Kagi, too, was rather familiar with the country at and around Harper's Ferry and the people of the adjacent regions.

8. *Idem*, page 454; "Captain John Brown and Harper's Ferry," by Boyd B. Stutler, 1926, page 17.

CHAPTER XVI

In Chambersburg

In the latter part of June, 1859, or early in July, when Brown was shaping his plans towards his hazardous attack upon Harper's Ferry, John H. Kagi went to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, where he spent most of the time until the last of September, when he joined Brown and the other men at the Kennedy Farm in Washington County, Maryland. On April 30, 1932, accompanied by Dr. and Mrs. Henry T. McDonald and their son Frank, of Harper's Ferry, I drove from Harper's Ferry across the Potomac River bridge, turned to the left, and after going up the Maryland side of the river for a short distance turned northward up a mountain hollow and followed the country road to the Kennedy Farm, which, by the speedometer on the car, is at a distance of about five miles from the Ferry by the winding road, though not more than three or three and a half miles in a direct line, almost exactly north.

Chambersburg, the county-seat of Franklin County, Pennsylvania, is about forty-five miles due north of Harper's Ferry, and several miles nearer to the Kennedy Farm. If a straight line were drawn from Harper's Ferry to Chambersburg, it would run through the Kennedy Farm and also the city of Hagerstown, Maryland, which is about 18 miles south of Chambersburg.

By a remarkable coincidence we are enabled to get a rather intimate picture of Kagi at Chambersburg. It happened that another young Kagi (Franklin Keagy), later the historian of the family, boarded at the same place with John Henri. The latter gave his name as "John Henri," and Franklin at the time knew him as such, but later learned his real identity. I quote here from Franklin Keagy:

> In the spring of 1858 he went with John Brown and others to Chatham, Canada, where was held the Convention of the 'Friends

This photograph represents the house of Mrs. Mary Rittner; the widow of one of ex-Governor Rittner's sons, at Chambersburg, Pa. At this house John Brown, and his men boarded, when they were organizing their forces for their raid on Harper's Ferry, Va. in the summer and fall of 1859. Franklin Keagy met Brown and his leading men daily at this house; as a boarder. This picture taken in May 1890. House is on East King St.

of Freedom.' Kagi was elected secretary of the Convention and also Secretary of War of Brown's Provisional government. In the following year, sometime about June, in company with Brown, he came to Chambersburg, Pa., and engaged board at the house of Mrs. Mary Rittner, on East King Street, where he remained most of the time until the first week in October, when he and Brown left there for the Kennedy place near Harper's Ferry, Va., and from there to the Ferry on the night of October 16, 1859.

During the time of his stay at the home of Mrs. Rittner, Kagi won the good opinion of the family and boarders by his friendly manner and social disposition. He took a great interest in instructing and pleasing the young folks in the family by engaging with them in social games, etc. All of these young misses have grown

to womanhood and now have families of their own, but to this day [1899] speak of the kind conduct of Kagi toward them and sincerely mourn his unhappy fate. He was a fluent talker and freely discussed the questions of the day with the boarders, always using good language that at times sparkled with humorous wit. To the writer of this sketch he appeared more like a divinity student than a warrior.

He was of medium height and build, had large blue-gray eyes, and a somewhat round face, full of expression when engaged in an animated conversation, but somewhat careless in his dress. Several incidents occurred during his stay in Chambersburg that I will relate as told me by Mrs. Rittner and her eldest daughter a short time after they occurred. One day accompanied by one of the eldest of Mrs. Rittner's daughters, he went to a photograph gallery kept by a Mr. John Keagy, who was distantly related to him, though at that time the artist was not aware of it, as John Henri was the name by which he was known at his boarding place. After the negative was taken and John Henri turned to leave the room, the artist, as was usual, asked him his name. He replied John Henri. The artist being an aged man and a little hard of hearing had to ask again, and the third time before he was assured he had the name right. As Henri and his little companion were leaving the room he said to the little girl, 'I could have given him a name he will always remember,' meaning his full name, which was the same name as that of the artist. . . . The above recited expression is the only one as far as known which he ever made that would indicate a secret mission during his stay here, but in his correspondence with his cousins in Virginia he asked them to direct his letters to 'John Henri.' . . . . This the reader need not be told was for prudential reasons.

I will relate another little incident that occurred during his stay in this place, which will show his skill as a marksman. A near neighbor of Mrs. Rittner's named Gross, a man of rough, uncouth habit, one who had won the unenviable name of "Slave Catcher," had a worthless dog that annoyed the neighbors by running over and destroying their gardens. As Mrs. Rittner's lot adjoined the Gross property she was the most annoyed, and all her requests to the dog's owner to abate the nuisance were treated with scorn. Indeed Gross rather delighted in annoying her because he knew she was a woman of pronounced anti-slavery sentiments, and for every slave that Gross captured and returned to his master she aided a score to freedom and liberty. The daily depredations of the dog were exceedingly provoking and became so frequent that she expressed a wish some one would shoot him. The room occupied by John Henri was on the first floor adjoining the dining-room

and a window opened out toward the garden. The weather being warm, Mr. Henri sat near the open window engaged in writing when his attention was directed to the garden by Mrs. Rittner (who was in the dining-room and from the open door saw the dog leap the fence and commence his foray among her vines and vegetables) exclaiming: 'Oh, there is that hateful dog again.' She had scarcely uttered the words when the sharp report of a pistol rang out and ere she could turn around the dog fell over dead shot through the heart. The distance was at least fifty yards. The dog was left there until evening when some one threw him over the fence into his master's lot, where he was found the next day. The owner swore terribly, declaring he would shoot the person, if he ever discovered who did it. He never attempted to avenge it, for if he had it would have insured his speedy exit out of the world and ended his dastardly slave-catching proclivities, as his character in this respect was well known to Brown and his men.

The life and conduct of John Henri during his stay in Chambersburg was most exemplary. The greater part of his time was spent in reading and writing. His was a strong social nature and he no doubt would have made a model husband. He frequently engaged in reading aloud to Mrs. Rittner while she was engaged at her work, sometimes from newspapers, histories or poetry. Sometimes he would go away for a few days and then return again. At the time that the celebrated Frederick Douglass came to Chambersburg, Pa., to meet Brown, John Henri was present at the meeting, which took place in an old stone quarry near the creek south of town. This occurred Aug. 19, 1859, or about nine weeks before the raid upon the Ferry. . . . Kagi had become a scientific military officer and brilliant hopes were formed of his future by the frinds who knew him best. He was a young man, of clear, logical intellect, but wholly unlike his leader, Brown, he was skeptical in religious matters, and engaged in the military anti-slavery movement rather from a haughty sense of duty to a friendless race, and in obedience to the teachings of Virginia's greatest statesmen. His talents, natural ability and acquirements would have enabled him to make his mark in any society.[1]

It happens (entirely by an accident) that I am able to supply a few additional and definite facts about the Keagy photographer in Chambersburg to whom John Henri did not tell his real name. In 1934, looking over the old marriage records of Rockingham County, Va., I found entry of the marriage, on April 18, 1855, of James Keagy, aged 33, single, "photogra-

1. "Kägy Relationship in America," pages 330-333.

phist," son of John and Jane Keagy, born in Bedford County, Pa., to Martha Clementina Conrad, aged 27, single, daughter of George and Susan Conrad, in Harrisonburg, Va.; minister, Rev. John L. Clark. It is possible that this James (not John) Keagy was the photographer in Chambersburg to whose studio John Henri and the little Rittner girl went. If so, he was at the time only 37—not very "aged," though he might have seemed so to the younger men, John and Franklin. However, it seems more probable that the photographer in question was the father of James. His name was John, and he would have been a rather aged man in 1859.

And I am wondering about Kagi's alleged "correspondence with his cousins in Virginia" while he was in Chambersburg. As shown in earlier chapters, he had carried on frequent correspondence with his cousin Anna Kagey and other members of her family from 1853 to 1855, and occasionally for a year or two later, but I doubt whether there was any communication from Chambersburg in 1859. My mother's (Anna Kagey Wayland's) diary covers the period day by day, and in earlier years she always made a record when a letter was received from John, or his father, or his sister Mary, or from his sister Barbara, but I have found no entry relating to any exchange of letters with any of them in 1859. As a matter of fact, my mother did not know anything of John's whereabouts in 1859 until she heard of his death at Harper's Ferry in October, and I doubt whether any of the other Virginia Kageys knew where he was during the six months prior to that event, unless, possibly, it was my uncle Abe, Anna's brother. He was almost as outright an abolitionist as was John, though he was not disposed to resort to armed force in any liberation movement. But, as I say, he may have had some correspondence, secretly, with John while the latter was in Chambersburg. Uncle Abe was living when Franklin was assembling his materials for his history of the family, and I know that Franklin spent some time at my uncle's house in Shenandoah County, Va. It may

Old Kennedy House from the southwest, with Elk Ridge in the background. Photo, April 28, 1932.

be that Uncle Abe gave him information on which he based the statement quoted above.

While Kagi was in Chambersburg he no doubt looked after shipments of pikes which were sent there to "Isaac Smith & Sons." These weapons reached the Kennedy Farm late in September, along with consignments of Sharp's rifles. Before "Isaac Smith & Sons" rented the Kennedy Farm, as it appears, Kagi went down from Chambersburg and remained with them two or three days at Sandy Hook, near the Kennedy Farm.[2] However, Hinton's statement that Kagi's likeness to the "Virginian 'Keagys' as his uncle's family were called in the neighborhood, compelled him to make a quick retreat to Chambersburg," is all imagination.[3] The Virginia Kageys were not called "Keagys," and they did not live in the neighborhood. My grandfather, Jacob Kagey, lived 70 miles up the Valley (southwest) from Harper's Ferry, and the others, John's near relatives, lived still farther up the Valley, southwest from Harper's Ferry.

Hinton's statements about Mrs. Rittner and Kagi's sojourn at her house are probably more reliable. I quote:

"Kagi remained at Chambersburg, under the name of 'John Henri.' He boarded at the house of Mrs. Rittner, the widow of a famous ex-governor of Pennsylvania, known in State history as being a sturdy man of anti-slavery sentiment and the first organizer of free or public schools, also as an early friend and political associate of the 'great commoner.' Thaddeus Stevens, 'Isaac Smith,' and his sons also stopped at Mrs. Rittner's. Occasionally Tidd, Merriam, and one or two others stopped there; Mrs. Virginia Cook, also most of the men, as they arrived, went to Bedford or Hagerstown. The colored men were chiefly booked at Chambersburg by Henry Watson, a trusted colored agent of 'the underground railroad.' "[4]

It has been noted that John Edwin Cook went to Harper's

2. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, pages 239, 246.

3. *Idem,* page 246.

4. *Idem,* page 249.

Ferry soon after the Canada convention. According to a recent writer, "On the fifth of June, 1858, a stoop-shouldered, fair-haired, blue-eyed, young man of twenty-eight years alighted from a train at Harpers Ferry. He was a person of pleasing address and intelligent appearance. He gazed for a short time at the beautiful view before him and then directed his steps to the widow Kennedy's boarding house located on a quiet street not far from the United States Armory and Arsenal."[5] This was Cook. He posed as a book agent, historian, and prospector; is said to have taught school for a while. In the meantime he became acquainted with the lay of the land and many families of the neighborhood. On April 15, 1859, he married Mary Virginia Kennedy, the daughter of his landlady.[6] He and his wife probably continued to live at Mrs. Kennedy's.

In November, 1859, while he was on trial at Charles Town, Cook wrote out and signed a lengthy statement of his connections with John Brown. In this he says that a few days before the raid at Harper's Ferry Captain Brown and his son Watson took his (Cook's) wife and child to Chambersburg, and that Brown on his return told him that he got her (Mrs. Cook) a good boarding-place in Chambersburg, at Mrs. Rittner's.[7]

One of the letters that Kagi wrote not long before he left Chambersburg to go down to the Kennedy Farm, which must be clearly distinguished from the home of Mrs. Kennedy in Harper's Ferry, has been preserved. It is as follows:

Chambersburg, Pa.,
Saturday, Sept. 24, 1859

My Dear Father & Sister:

I am sorry that I could not write you before, and that I have not heard from you for a long time. I can only say a few words to you now.

My business is progressing finely—I could not ask for better

5. "A History of Jefferson County, West Virginia," 1941, by Millard K. Bushong, page 109.

6. Jefferson County marriage records, of the date.

7. "John Brown and His Men," by Richard J. Hinton, revised edition, pages 707, 708.

prospects. My *partners* are all about 60 miles this side of Uncle Jacobs—and enough of them to put the business through in the best of style. Our freight is now all on the ground with them in safety, and we are now only waiting a *few days* for two or three more hands, not so much because we *want* them, but because they want a share themselves.

So that in a *very* few days we shall commence—You may even hear of it before you get this letter. Things could not be more cheerful and more certain of success than they are. We have worked hard, and suffered much, but the hardest is done now, and a glorious success is in sight.

I will say—can say—only a word more now. I will write soon after we commence work. When you write give me all the news—for I shall here after have only three correspondents in all —you, Mr. Dana of *The Tribune*, and Mr. Phillips of Lawrence, so that I shall look to you for all news about our friends and acquaintances. Direct the letters like this [H. K.] and put them in *another envelop*, and direct it as follows.

Mrs. Mary W. Ritner,
Chambersburg
Pa.

But let no one else know how you send them.

Be cheerful my dear father and sisters—dont *imagine* dangers, all will be well. My love to Allens.

Affectionately

your Brother,[8]

[Signature torn off]

8. This letter is preserved in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society. Miss Louise Barry, Curator of Manuscripts, has kindly supplied me with a copy.

Old Kennedy House from the northwest. The old springhouse is in the hollow beyond; Elk Ridge is in the background. Photo, April 28, 1932. The log part of the house is oldest. The stone and brick part is plastered over.

CHAPTER XVII

At Harper's Ferry

In 1794 the Federal Government purchased 125 acres of land at Harper's Ferry for the establishment of a national armory. The tract lay alongside the Potomac River and extended from the confluence of the rivers for some distance up the Potomac. Water power was provided by a canal which was brought down from a dam some distance up the stream. For many years after the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad was built it ran up alongside the Potomac, between the armory and the river. At the southwest end of the bridge over the Potomac (Harper's Ferry end) the railroad made a sharp right-hand turn to go up the river, and at this point the railroad to Winchester branched off to the left. The latter ran up the Shenandoah for several miles, then went up a ravine to Halltown, Charles Town, and so on. In 1817 John H. Hall, an inventor and gunsmith from Maine, began to work in the armory, and later two buildings were erected for his use in making breech-loading rifles. These stood beside the Shenandoah River and the Winchester railroad at a distance between a quarter of a mile and a half-mile above the confluence of the rivers. These buildings were the rifle factory that Brown ordered Kagi and others to defend in the raid. Harper's Ferry at that time was a prosperous town of two or three thousand inhabitants.[1]

Sunday night, October 16, 1859, Brown and his party came down from the Kennedy Farm on the Maryland side and crossed the bridge to Harper's Ferry. Cook and Tidd cut the telegraph wires. Kagi and Stevens led the march and were the first to cross the bridge. Williams, the watchman at the bridge,

1. "Captain John Brown and Harper's Ferry," by Boyd B. Stutler, 1926, page 18; "A History of Jefferson County, West Virginia," by Millard K. Bushong, 1941, pages 77, 78.

was captured without disturbance. The watchman at the armory made an outcry but was soon taken. The two prisoners were placed in charge of Jeremiah Anderson and Dauphin Thompson. Watson Brown and Stewart Taylor were placed out as guards, and the engine-house was occupied. Stevens, with Hazlett and Edwin Coppoc, took charge of the armory while Kagi, Copeland, and others went up to Hall's rifle factory. The first man shot was Heyward Shepherd, a free Negro of means and good standing, who acted as a porter and baggage master at the railroad station. He ran and failed to halt when ordered to do so.

Most persons in the town knew nothing of the raid until the next morning, then the news flew over the countryside like wildfire. Groups of citizens and several militia companies came in and Brown and his men were besieged. There was much firing and a few men on both sides were killed. Before night (Monday) Kagi and the half-dozen men with him were hotly pressed at the rifle works and all or nearly all were killed while trying to escape across the Shenandoah. A high bluff rises precipitously along the west side of the river at this point and afforded an excellent vantage ground for those attacking the rifle factory, which stood in the low ground between the bluff and the river. On the opposite (east) side of the river is a wooded mountain known as Loudoun Heights.

Sunday night, after coming to the Ferry and getting control, Brown sent Stevens, Cook, and others out to bring in some of the leading men of the neighborhood as hostages, among them Colonel Lewis W. Washington, whose home was near Halltown, about four miles away. Washington's large wagon and horses, with some of his slaves, were also brought to the Ferry. This team was used to bring additional arms down from the Maryland side. In this proceeding Cook remained on the Maryland side, and later escaped, for the time being. Brown finally, with a few of his followers and the hostages, was besieged in the engine-house.

Late Monday night Brevet-Colonel Robert E. Lee arrived

at the Ferry with a detachment of 90 U. S. Marines sent out from Washington. With Lee was Lieutenant J. E. B. Stuart, later the distinguished Confederate cavalry leader. On going to the engine-house to summon a surrender Stuart recognized John Brown, who at once admitted his identity. In the morning, after Brown's refusal to surrender, the door of the engine-house was broken in and the defenders, those that were still alive, were taken prisoners. Trials and executions shortly followed at Charles Town.

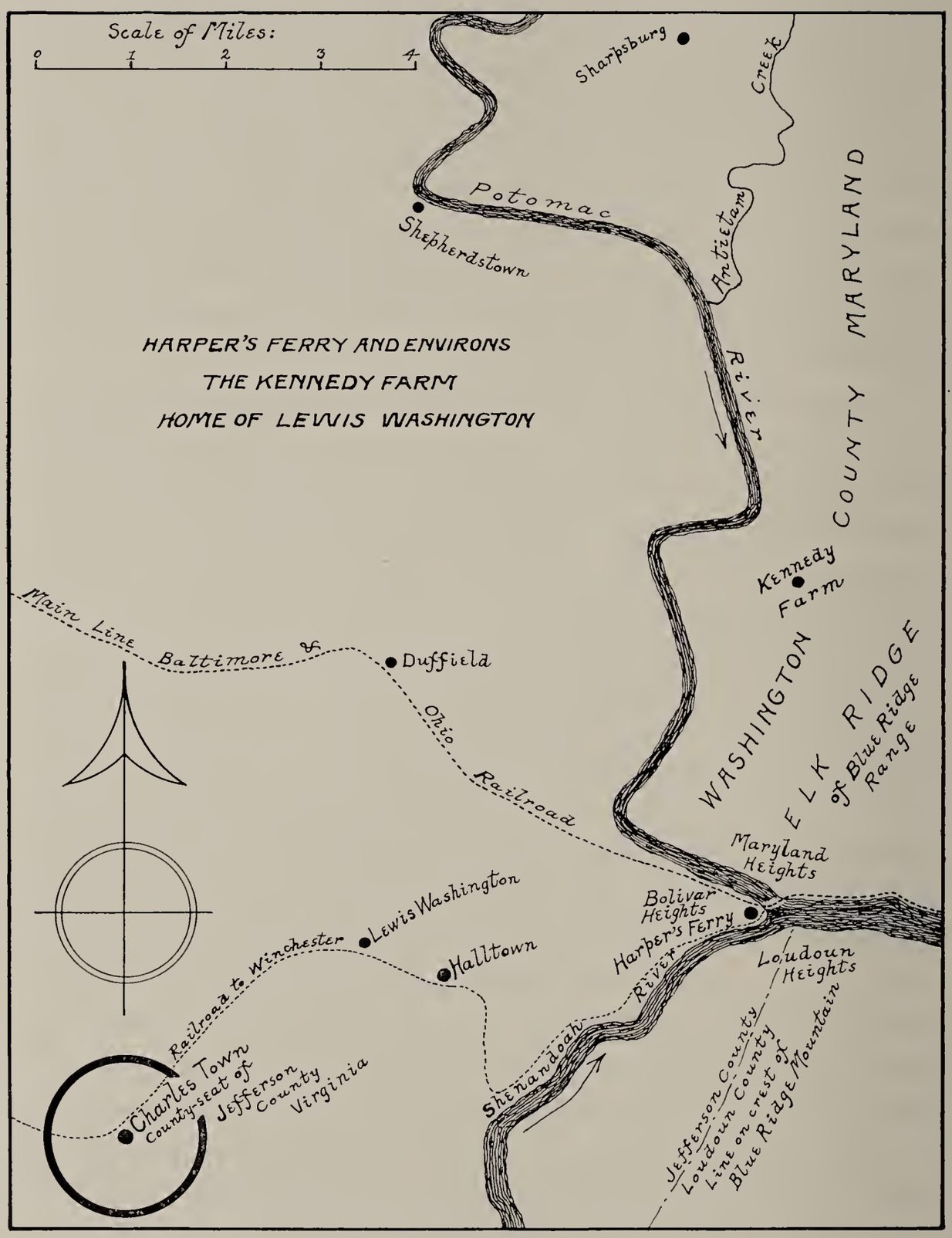
Opposed to Brown, those killed were Heyward Shepherd, Mayor Fontaine Beckham, G. W. Turner, from the neighborhood, Thomas Boerly, a merchant and grocer; Private Luke Quinn of the marines. Jim, a slave belonging to Dr. Fuller, but hired to Colonel Lewis W. Washington, was drowned while trying to swim the river. About ten were wounded. Of those with Brown, the following were killed: Jeremiah G. Anderson, Oliver Brown, Watson Brown, John Henri Kagi, Lewis S. Leary, William H. Leeman, Dangerfield Newby, Stewart Taylor, Dauphin O. Thompson, and William Thompson. John Brown and others were wounded. Those at once captured and later hanged at Charles Town were John Brown, John A. Copeland, Edwin Coppoc, Shields Green, and Aaron D. Stevens. John E. Cook and Albert Hazlett, who escaped from the raid, were soon captured in Pennsylvania,[2] taken to Charles Town, and there tried, convicted, and hanged. Osborne P. Anderson, Owen Brown, Barclay Coppoc, Francis P. Merriam, and Charles P. Tidd escaped and were not captured.[3]

As to Kagi's expectations in the Harper's Ferry venture, Hinton's statements do not appear altogether consistent. I quote from him the following:

"It was John Henri Kagi whom Brown permitted to tell me fully in the summer of 1858, as to his startling design, and who replied to me when I involuntarily exclaimed that all

2. A graphic and detailed account of the capture of Cook may be found in "Abraham Lincoln and Men of War-Times," by A. K. McClure, 1892, pages 307-326.

3. See "Captain John Brown and Harper's Ferry," by Boyd B. Stutler, page 23.



would be killed, 'Yes, I know it, Hinton, *but the result will be worth the sacrifice.*' "

Hinton then continues: "I recall my friend as a man of personal beauty, with a fine, well-shaped head, a voice of quiet, sweet tones, that could be penetrating and cutting, too, almost

to sharpness. The eyes were remarkable—large, full, well-set beneath strongly arched brows. Ordinarily they wore a veiled look, reminding me of a slow-burning fire of heated coals, hidden behind a mica door. Hazel-gray in color, irridescent in light and effect. The face gave you confidence in the character that had already wrought it into a stern gravity beyond its years. One would trust or turn away at once, according to the purpose sought. Kagi was not a man of expressed enthusiasms; on the contrary, he was cold in manner, and his conclusions were stamped with the approval of his intellect. Mentally, he was the ablest of those who followed John Brown to Harper's Ferry. In the best sense, too, he was the most scholarly and cultured." [4]

In another connection Hinton writes the following:

"With some manuscript letters of Kagi, filed by the late Col. William A. Phillips, of Kansas, in the State Historical Society's Library, there was attached a note in which he describes briefly Kagi's fate, and says that 'he was not hopeful of the result of the attack, but accompanied Brown.' There is no justification for the remark in any extant letter or writing left by John Henri Kagi. On the contrary, he always wrote hopefully, cheering every one addressed." [5]

This declaration seems to me to be justified by the expressions in Kagi's letters that I have examined, quotations from and copies of which are given in preceding pages. Reference may be made especially to the letter he wrote to his father and sister from Chambersburg on September 24, 1859. It may be said, of course, that in these letters to members of his family he was trying to reassure them and keep them from worrying. But if he had ever given any sign of doubt or hesitation we may wonder whether John Brown would have trusted him so fully and given him a place next to himself in the hazardous enterprise. He seems to have followed Brown devotedly and without wavering, almost blindly. The only instance of which I

4. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, pages 453, 454.

5. *Idem*, page 463.

John Brown's Fort at Harper's Ferry. This is on its original site, in the flat, near the confluence of the rivers, and in the armory area. It was moved from here in 1893 and taken to the World's Fair in Chicago; later brought back to Harpers Ferry.

have found any evidence in which Kagi even suggested a change in Brown's plans was in his message to Brown at noon on Monday, at Harper's Ferry, urging that the rifle works be abandoned and forces joined at the engine-house to fight a way out.[6]

If Kagi was cold in manner, it seems hard to believe that he "was not a man of expressed enthusiasms." On the contrary, I believe that we may say that he was not only tremendously enthusiastic in the abolition cause, but also manifested his enthusiasm in his letters, if not in his conversations. Indeed, he was not cold and calculating enough. His convictions and impulses are not to be credited to Brown—he had them before his association with Brown; but in the latter he found a man after his own heart and joined him without any reservation.

One of the deputy sheriffs of Jefferson County and the jailer at Charles Town was John Avis. For many years his son, James L. Avis, was a leading druggist in Harrisonburg, and was familiarly known as Doctor Avis. In August, 1916, I had several long talks with Dr. Avis about the raid at Harper's Ferry and made notes at the time of what he told me. So far as I have been able to check up on his statements they were accurate, with one exception. He thought that John Henri Kagi had been killed in the Potomac River, but this evidently was a mistake. Kagi and his comrades were killed in the Shenandoah River, which was right alongside the rifle factory. The latter was nearly or quite half a mile from the Potomac.

Dr. Avis said that his father went from his home in Charles Town to the Ferry, seven or eight miles, on Monday morning, October 17, having learned of the trouble there from an Irishman who had stayed over night at or near the Ferry, and who had hurried to Charles Town early in the morning. The Irishman had seen Brown's men bringing in prisoners from the neighborhood, but did not know who the marauders were. The impression seemed to prevail that they were Mexicans

6. *Ibid.*

and Indians. Deputy Sheriff Avis was a veteran of the Mexican War. He and the men with him were in a building very near the engine-house—they could hear Brown and his men cutting portholes through the walls. At first those in the "fort" had been able to fire out at only one place, the door. Captain Avis and his men would have broken into the engine-house before Lee and his marines arrived had it not been for conflicting orders from various militia officers present. Dr. Avis at the time was a boy of fourteen or fifteen, and was with his father at the scene of the fight. He told me that whenever a shot was fired it was easy enough to tell from which side it came, since the reports of the Sharp's rifles used by Brown and his men made a different sound from those used by the besiegers.

One of the men with Sheriff Avis was Richard Blackburn Washington (1822-1910), a kinsman and neighbor of Colonel Lewis W. Washington. When Turner was shot Avis told Washington to shoot the Negro who had killed Turner. This Washington did. The Negro was probably Dangerfield Newby. "Colonel Dick Washington," Dr. Avis said, "was a famous squirrel hunter and a crack marksman."

Dr. Avis said that many of the men who worked in the shops at Harper's Ferry were from the North, and he was of the opinion that they were in sympathy with Brown and had probably promised to help him, but failed him in the pinch. A number of them, he said, left Harper's Ferry after the raid. These statements he handed on from his father who drew his conclusions from what he saw and from what he learned from inside sources.

As jailer at Charles Town Captain Avis was considerate of Brown and the other prisoners and shielded them as much as possible from the taunts and insults of hostile visitors. Dr. Avis himself then a boy, was often in the jail with Brown for hours at a time. One day he took in for Brown a pan of baked apples, for which Brown gave him a gold dollar. Taking a fancy to the boy, Brown willed him his Sharp's rifle and pistol.

The rifle young Avis later carried in the Civil War. The pistol he had after he came to Harrisonburg, then gave it to his younger brother who was a lieutenant in the regular army. It was finally lost, Dr. Avis told me, along with Lieutenant Avis's fine library, in the foundering of a Mississippi River steamboat.

After the raid at Harper's Ferry many stories were told of mysterious strangers who had circulated around in various communities in the Shenandoah Valley and elsewhere. One was to this effect, that two men came one evening to the home of a Mr. Walker on the Shenandoah River, asking to stay overnight. They were hospitably entertained. The next day when a couple of the young Negroes of the household went down to a garden patch by the river to get some vegetables for dinner they saw the two strangers beckoning to them. They were offered guns and other weapons with which to fight for their freedom. Just then the boys heard their mammy calling them: "Come on hyah wif dem taters, an' cohn, you rascals, oah I'll break yo' backs." Fear of the old woman outweighed every other consideration, and back to the house they hurried.

My mother always believed that John Kagi was at her house. She had not seen him since he had left Virginia for Nebraska in March, 1855, and in the meantime she and my father had moved from her father's to the house on the hill at Woodlawn. One day when she was at home with her small children a "tramp" called at the door, begging money and clothing. She was on the point of exclaiming, "How are you, Cousin John!" but inasmuch as he pretended to be an utter stranger and perhaps not too "bright", she refrained. After the raid was reported and it was learned that John was one of the raiders she was satisfied that he had been her mysterious visitor. Hinton says that Kagi, at the time of his death, wore a short, full dark-brown beard.[7] A beard may have been part of his disguise at Woodlawn, if he really was there. Nobody there, unless it was my mother's brother Abe, had heard from

7. "John Brown and His Men," revised edition, page 453.

The old brick engine house, "John Brown's Fort," on its present location at the southwestern side of the campus of Storer College, Harper's Ferry; photograph made January 4, 1939.

John for some time, and the only entry in my mother's diary under date of October 16, 1859, was this brief sentence: "The Abolitionists seized upon Harper's Ferry": written in, no doubt, a day or two after the event. Under date of October 23 appeared this: "We were down at Father's awhile. I read the particulars of Harper's Ferry."

There are conflicting statements as to what became of Kagi's body. Hinton says: "The bodies of Kagi, Leary, and Wm. Thompson were taken out of the river on the 18th, and buried in shallow holes upon the river bank, where the dogs soon rooted them out. They were partly destroyed before the Winchester doctors took the remains away for dissection."[8] Other accounts have it that the bodies of Kagi and others lay buried by the Shenandoah River until August, 1899, when they were exhumed and carried for reinterment beside John Brown at North Elba, New York.[9]

In 1958, at Shepherdstown, W. Va., was reprinted a book of 200 pages entitled "The Strange Story of Harper's Ferry." It was first printed at Martinsburg in 1903. The author was Joseph Barry, a man of education and social standing, "a resident of the place for half a century." Forty-nine pages of the book are devoted to the raid of October 1859, events preceding and following, and to the several persons participating and otherwise involved. Following is a paragraph concerning John Henri Kagi.

"John or, as he was sometimes called, Henrie Kagi, is said to have been a remarkably fine looking man, with a profusion of black hair and a flowing beard of the same color. He was about thirty years of age, tall and portly, and he did not display the same ferocity that many of the others exhibited. He was 'secretary of war' under Brown's provisional government and he held the rank of captain. He is supposed to have been a native

8. *Idem*, page 312.

9. "Captain John Brown and Harper's Ferry", by Boyd B. Stutler, page 17; "Kägy Relationship in America," page 334.

of Ohio. He was killed in the Shenandoah near the rifle factory."

This portrayal of Kagi is given for what it may be worth. No two persons describing him, so far as I have seen, have agreed in every particular. Barry is clearly mistaken as to his age—it was only 24 years and 7 months when he died. But he was Brown's "Secretary of War," he was born in Ohio, and he was killed in the Shenandoah River near the rifle factory.

CHAPTER XVIII

Kagi's Kin in Later Years

As already noted John Henri Kagi's sister Barbara, two years his senior, in 1852 married Allen B. Mayhew of Ohio. In or about the same year they moved to Nebraska and settled at or near the site of Nebraska City, which Mayhew assisted in laying out in July, 1854.[1] Mayhew built a small but substantial log house which is still standing in good condition. Near the cabin a spacious cave was dug, ostensibly for the storing of fruits and vegetables to be consumed by the members of a "Vegetarian Society," of which no doubt John Henri Kagi was a leading member. He was a strict vegetarian, as shown in Chapter V. However, as it appears, the cave served a good purpose in the operations of the "underground railroad."

Allen Mayhew evidently was a man of means and influence in the new community, the owner of considerable tracts of land; a farmer, he also engaged in various related activities. According to some reports, he did some freighting across the plains with prairie schooners. Nebraska City is said to have been an important starting-point for such transportation. From one trip west he did not return, and it was generally supposed that he had been killed by Indians. Mr. Edward D. Bartling of Nebraska City presents the following pertinent items, which seem to be definite and conclusive:

"In the spring of 1862, Allen B. Mayhew left Nebraska City for Salt Lake City, Utah.

"The *Deseret News*, Deseret, Utah, of December 2, 1862, says in part: 'Mr. Mayhew, being attracted farther west by fabulous reports from the gold fields of Washington Territory, left Nebraska City on May 1, 1862, with the intention of spending the winter in the Valley in southern Utah, and of re-

1. "John Henry Kagi and the Old Log Cabin Home," by Edward D. Bartling, revised edition, 1940, pages 8, 9.

suming his journey in the spring for Salmon River. He died after a severe illness of three days on December 1, 1862, at the residence of Mr. Lees in Deseret, Utah.' "[2]

I quote further from Mr. Bartling:

"Mrs. Mayhew appeared in the Probate Court of Otoe County, Nebraska, in the *Matter of the Estate of Allen B. Mayhew,* and made application for administration, April 11, 1864, stating that Allen B. Mayhew died at or near Great Salt Lake City in the Territory of Utah, on or about the first day of December, 1862.

"In the application, Mrs. Mayhew mentioned that she was the mother of six children, four of whom were under the age of seven years.

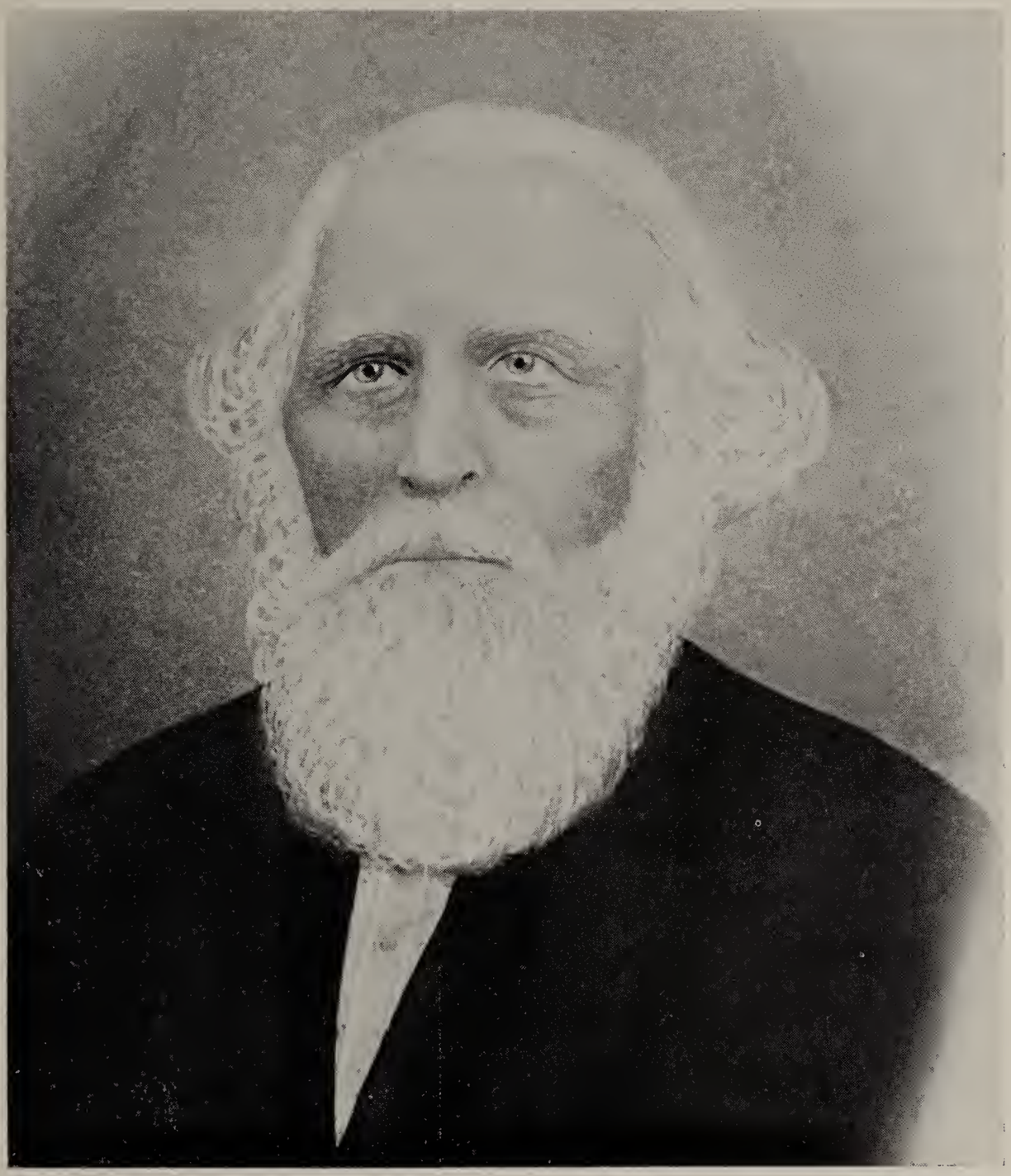
"Acting as administratrix, Mrs. Mayhew sold the farm, the old log cabin, and the city property on October 21, 1864. Abraham N. Kagy, her father, bought at the sale the block of lots west of Eighteenth Street and north of Third Corso upon which Mr. Mayhew had built a house. Mrs. Mayhew with her children moved into this house. Later Mrs. Mayhew moved to her father's farm southeast of Nebraska City. She married again to Mr. Bradway."[3]

Mrs. Mayhew's father (Uncle "California Abe") lived on a small stream known as Camp Creek, in the southeast corner of Otoe County, Nebraska, two or three miles from Barney, which was a flag-stop on the railroad between Nebraska City and Peru. As I remember it in 1881, Barney was not even a village. The railroad ran alongside the Missouri River (west side). On the land side of the railroad, against the rising ground, was the station-house in which the station-master had his residence. He probably had a stable for his team of horses and a shed for his farm wagon. If there were any other buildings in sight I do not now recall them.

Uncle Abe's 80-acre farm on Camp Creek, according to Mr. Bartling, lies eight miles south and three miles east of

2. *Idem,* page 48.

3. *Ibid.*



Abraham Neff Kagey (1807-1893), "California Abe," father of John Henri Kagi. Abraham N. Kagey was born near Rude's Hill, Shenandoah County, Va.; went to Ohio as a young man; later to California; then from Ohio to Nebraska. Late in life he took up a homestead in Edwards County, Kansas, where he died January 15, 1893. Photo from a crayon portrait, made about 1884.

Nebraska City, and was the west half of the northwest quarter of section 25 in township 7 of range 14. Uncle Abe probably located there in 1857, about the time his daughter Mary came out from Ohio to keep house for him. There was his home until 1885. Mary in 1862 married John O. Davis, and evi-

dently she and her husband made their home with Uncle Abe until her death in 1869. It was soon after her death, in all probability, that Barbara Bradway moved down to Camp Creek from Nebraska City.

In 1867 and 1868 my mother's younger brother, Joel F. Kagey, was in the West and spent some time at Nebraska City, Camp Creek, and other places in the same region. He and John O. Davis, I understand, became good friends. At any rate, Uncle Joel brought back to Virginia with him a photograph of Davis, which I have, and which is reproduced herewith. Some persons in Nebraska at that time got the impression that Joel was Uncle "California Abe's" son. He was the son of Jacob Kagey (1806-1864), Abe's brother.

I have two letters that Uncle Abe wrote to my mother (in Virginia) from Camp Creek, one in 1872, the other in 1873. These I give in full below, and in them will be found items of genealogy as well as some other facts of interest.

Sept. 10th, 1872,
Camp Creek, Nebraska.

Dear Niece

It is no use for me to ask to be excused for not writing sooner for it can hardly be granted, so I will just say that I put it off as long as I dare, for you must know that I am getting Old, am in my 66th year since July last, and I think that if you should live to be of that age, that you will defer it some what longer than at your age. Well it is almost 10 Months since I received your kind letter, and one year and 1 day since my last to you.

We are all as well as comon, had the whooping cough among the younger of the Family, you may think that I have a young family, well in one sense I have, for your cousin Barbara is hear with me & her son Edward & his Wife. I think that you wished me to give you the Names of her Sons, for Daughters she has none living, (she had two) and one son is dead.

I will begin with the oldest, Edward F., 23, Henry K., almost 21, Charles S., 16, Thomas 14, Hanabal H., in his 12, Allen 10, the above are Mayhews, one son & Daughter dead. Now of the Bradways, Elmer E., 5, & Calvin 3 years old last April, one Daughter Dead of the Bradways, and one adopted Son almost 2 years old. Now you have all of them. I have told her about her picture, but she says if she went to geting them taken, there

are so menny that wood want them, that there would be no end of them.

John O. Davis is at Salt Lake City, Lizi is with him, Hattie is in this State about 45 Miles from hear, so I can not tell how they are, Hoping that this will find you all well, I still Remain your Uncle Abe.

P. S. Tell Joel that Picture was received in due time. A. N. K.

The adopted son mentioned above was probably Frank, known as Frank Bradway, whom I saw at Camp Creek in 1881, and then about ten years old. Lizi and Hattie were daughters of John O. Davis and his wife Mary Kagey, then (in 1872), deceased. I shall have something more to say about Hattie Davis farther on in this narrative.

June the 27th, 1873
Camp Creek, Otoe Co. Neb.

Dear Niece,

Yours of May the 7 was not received untill May the 24, the reason why is, Some times I do not go to Nebraska City for 2 or 3 weeks, but still I was just as glad to get it then, as if I had got it sooner, for I see by that that my Friends have not forgoten me yet, it seems as your Sister and Brother Abe have forgoten they have an Uncle in the far of West, for neither write to me.

I lernt of the Death of your Mother by a letter from Sister Barbara. It is a great consolation to those who are left, to know that our friends Die in peace, you have no doubt but what your Mother is gone to a better World than this, Try and folow her example, so that your Death may be that of the Righteous. I am well, and hope that will you and yours in good Health, Your Cousin Barbara and her Boys all except Ed & Charles are gone to the South part of Kansas last fall, I had a letter from B. in April they well then, Charles is gone out in to Clay county in this State, Ed. Farms my place & I Board with him, he has a son, most 3 months old.

We had a hard winter, not much, that is not much at one time, but some snow most all the time no rain from October untill Spring. Some of the Farmers did not finish planting corn untill in June but such as was put in looks well. Wheat and oats look well.

We have new potatoes and Green Peas, and will have Some Apples, no Peaches. My plat of ground which I have sett apart for an orchard is big enough for 200 Trees, and has now about

180 Trees, of Apples, Pears, Peach and Cherry, Also 38 current bushes, 40 Grape vines, and 60 Goos Berrys (tame.)

We have verry Warm wether now, Harvest will soon be hear, I know not what wheat is going at, Flour per sac of 76 lb is 3¼ to 4 dollars, corn 12c per bu. Oats 19c per bu., Old potatoes 20c per bu. Bacon from 8 to 10c per lb. ham sugar cured 15c per lb. Butter 15c per lb. Eggs 8 to 10c per doz.

I do not know of anything of much importans to write at present, one thing I would like much to see all of the Friends in old Shenandoah, but times are hard with me, now, So I must bring my letter to an end.

Give my love to your Husband & children, And may the Lord Bless and Prosper you all in your lawful undertakings is the Prayer of your

Uncle Abe.

In the line above, "It is a great consolation . . . to know that our friends Die in peace," there is a stoical and dignified restraint, yet we must feel the throb of a deep undertone stirring from the fateful year of 1859. Evidently the writer did not share the agnostic or atheistic views of his son. Uncle Abe was a sober and honest man and a consistant member of the Methodist Church. Just when he began his profession of religion I have not been able to learn, but it was possibly in rather early life. He may have first held his membership with the congregation that met for worship in the (now) century-old church house, a beautiful example of New England architecture, that faces the public square in Bristolville, Ohio.

That Uncle Abe was thrifty and industrious may be inferred from his letter above. He was also rather versatile in his activities. Of him Mr. Bartling writes:

"Mr. Kagey was an Otoe County farmer for thirty years, and followed these trades: Blacksmith, carpenter, surveyor and stonemason. The commissioners' records of Otoe County . . . state that Abraham N. Kagey was paid $34.00 for seventeen days work as an assessor in Otoe precinct. This entry was dated May 2, 1864. The record also shows he was security on a bond and a judge of election." [4]

4. "John Henry Kagi and the Old Log Cabin Home," 1940 edition, page 9.

John Davis who, in 1862, married Mary Kagey, younger daughter of Abram Neff Kagey. Mary had three children. She died September 6, 1869. This photograph of John Davis, as printed on the back, was made by Batcheller & Wallbaum, Photographers, Post-Office Building, 5th Street, Nebraska City. No date is given, but it was probably about 1870.

At 3 a. m., August 31, 1881, my mother and I took the railroad train at the village of Craig, in Holt County, Missouri, where we had been visiting relatives, to go over into Nebraska for a visit with Uncle Abe and his daughter Barbara. After crossing the Missouri River on a ferry-boat, we reached Nebraska City about 7 a. m. There we spent a hot day waiting for the evening train down the river. When we alighted from the train at Barney an angry storm was just breaking. Uncle Abe,

not knowing the exact day of our coming, was not at the station to meet us, and no one else was there except an old Cornishman, Lawson Cook, the station master. In his rather frail-looking house he gave us shelter, and there we spent the night —one that I shall never forget. From dusk until midnight the storm raged with unabated fury. The rain was driven by a hard wind; the lightning was incessant, and the thunder rolled continuously, with now and then a crashing peal above the rest. As I remember, Mr. Cook said that he had grown up on the Cornish coast, but had never witnessed a worse storm. I think he spent several hours reading a paper by the flashing lightning.

About midnight or soon thereafter the storm subsided, and finally died away. The morning sun rose upon a drenched and subdued landscape. Mr. Cook hitched up his team and took us in his farm wagon over to Uncle Abe's on Camp Creek. A friend in need is a friend indeed.

My father reached Uncle Abe's house the next day, September 2d. While he was helping at Craig to get our trunk into the baggage car the train started, and when he attempted to board it was struck by the end of the coach and thrown back upon the platform. My mother and I did not know just what had happened until he came to Uncle Abe's. The conductor reassured us by saying that if a man had been run over we should have felt a jar.

We were at Uncle Abe's until September 13th. I was then between eight and nine years of age. Frank Bradway, Cousin Barbara's adopted son, was a year or two older. We had great times swimming (rather wading and paddling) in the muddy waters of Camp Creek and gathering hazel-nuts from the bushes that grew thickly along the banks of the stream. We also played Indian. Frank had a real Indian bow. I rigged up a make-shift with a good string and an elastic hazel stem. Uncle Abe told us how he used to catch wildcats along the creek in steel traps and spear them with his pitchfork. He, at this time, was seventy-four years old, with white hair and

beard, but hale and hearty. He walked erect and was brisk in his movements. I remember that when he went out to feed his hogs he would throw a bushel-basket full of corn up on his shoulder and carry it out to the hog lot without noticeable effort.

In January, 1882, Cousin Barbara, (Mrs. Bradway) died. Mr. Bartling states that she and her sister, Mary Davis, are both buried in the Camp Creek Cemetery, two miles from Uncle Abe's old home. In March, 1884, Uncle Abe came to Virginia for a visit and remained with his kinsfolk, mostly nephews and nieces, until the following August, when he returned to Nebraska. The next year, I believe it was, he went down into Kansas and took up a homestead on the prairie in Edwards County, on the border line between Edwards and Stafford. There he died in December, 1892, or January, 1893. He had the spirit of the pioneer and frontiersman to the end of his more than four-score years.

On January 31, 1885, Hattie A. Davis, the younger daughter of Uncle Abe's daughter, Mary, came to Shenandoah County, Virginia, from Boston, Massachusetts. In that city she had lived some time with a relative, perhaps a sister of her father, John O. Davis. She was with us (our family, Uncle Abram J. Kagey's, and other kinsfolk) until July 20th, when she departed for Nebraska or Kansas. I get the above dates from my mother's diary. In Kansas, Hattie kept house for her grandfather and was with him, until the time of his death. My impression is that she did not long survive him. She was married, I believe, but when or to whom I do not know.

The following letter, written by Hon. Charles L. Kagey of Kansas shortly before his death (October 13,1941) is pertinent to the subject of this chapter.

Wichita, Kansas
August 14, 1941

Dear John:

I received your letter of the 11th inst. this morning. Within half an hour after I received your letter, Hon. John Henry May-

hew, a member of the Legislature from Edwards County, came into the office and has been here for the last three or four hours. He is the [great] grandson of Uncle Abraham Neff Kagey. His grandfather was Allen Mayhew, who married the daughter of Uncle Abe, and had five [six] children, Ed, Tom, Charles, Hannibal, and Henry. All of the Mayhew grandchildren of Uncle Abe are dead. Allen Mayhew left his wife and children to go to California about 1849 [1862]. He was a blacksmith, and John thinks that he probably was going out there to join his father-in-law in the blacksmith business. [Uncle Abe returned from California in 1856.] He got as far as Salt Lake City, where he caught yellow fever and died. The communications were so poor at that time that the only news his family ever received about his death, was some clipping from a Salt Lake City paper which merely stated that he had died of yellow fever and was buried. Of course, in those days a yellow fever victim could not be shipped back to his family even though they had wanted it done.

I remember very well when Uncle Abe made his last visit to Shenandoah County in 1884. He spent several months at our home. I was then nearly eight years old and he told me stories about California and the "Gold Rush Days." I remember that he gave me a little shell that he had picked up when he was walking across the Ishmus of Panama on his trip to California and we kept it there in our home for many years. I do not know what has become of it.

I remember very well when Hattie Davis, Uncle Abe's granddaughter, came from Boston to Virginia. You say she was in the neighborhood from January until June, 1885, when she and Aunt Lizzie Kagey went to Bridgewater. I remember distinctly that she spent several months at our home. I even remember some of the gentlemen that my mother and aunts had call upon her. One of them was Dr. Eugene Good, who later married one of the Burke girls at New Market. Cousin Hattie later went to Kansas and I still remember how she cried when she told us good-by. The poor girl had a pretty hard time of it as I remember, and we felt very kindly towards her.

Later, in 1898, I went to the graveyard where Uncle Abe was buried, about 12 or 14 miles southwest of Macksville, Kansas. I remember I hired two horses and a buggy and drove out there. I saw Cousin Hattie Davis' grave as well. She had married a man by the name of Denny, and when she died, left a daughter whose name, as John Mayhew remembers, was Ollie. John tells me that he remembers the circumstances of Uncle Abe's death very distinctly. He is now 53 years of age and at the time Uncle Abe died, was about 5 years old, but he says that Uncle Abe was

living with his grandson, Ed Mayhew, and that they were very kind to him. He can remember Uncle Abe very distinctly and knows the facts that I have just given you. As John remembers it, Hattie Denny did not live with him until her death. She had married and gone elsewhere. John remembers Uncle Abe's funeral.

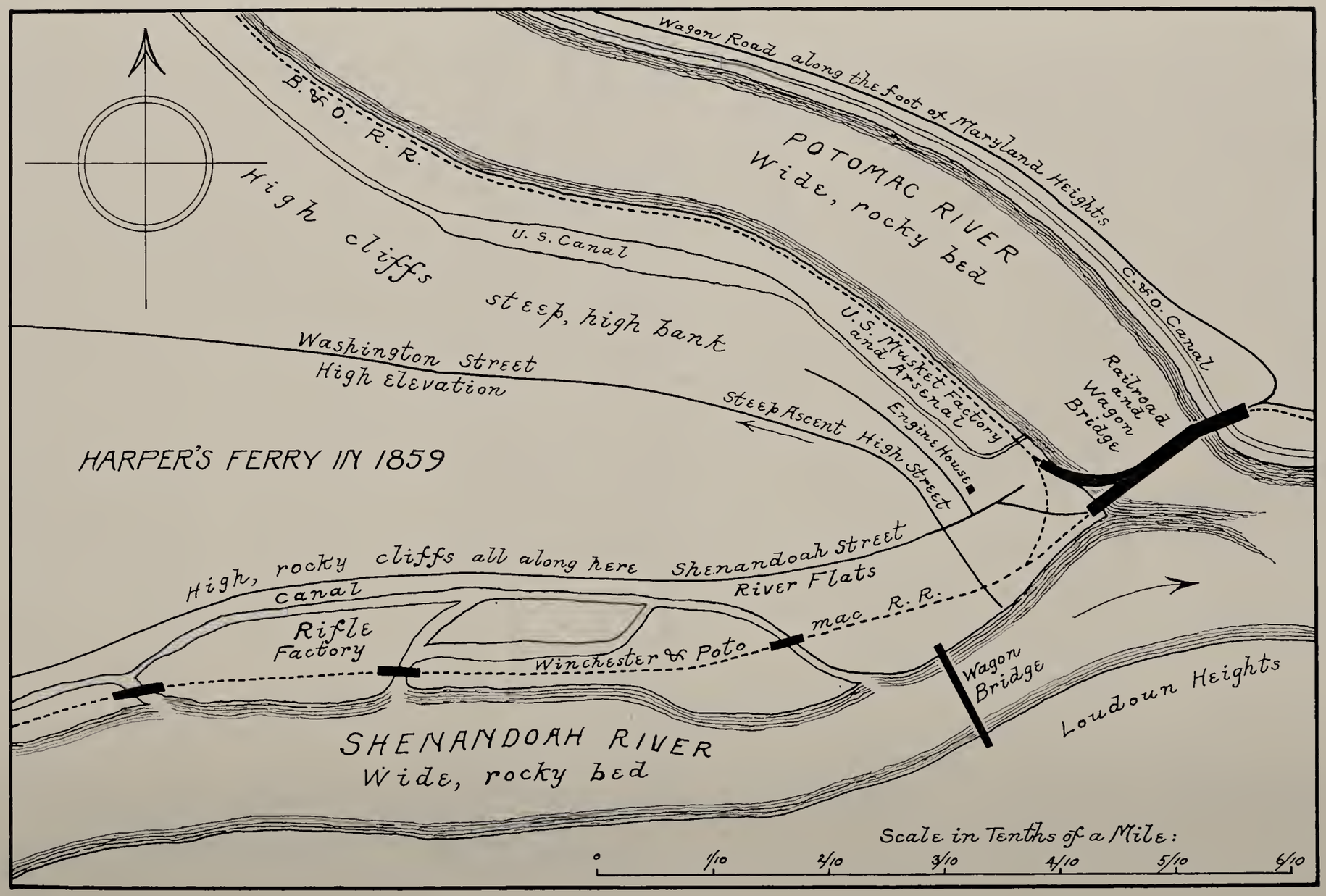
I have asked Mr. Mayhew to get the information from some of the older members of his family with reference to the date of Uncle Abe's death, the name of Hattie Davis, the date of her marriage, the date of her death, and the present whereabouts of her daughter, if he is able to do so.

Uncle Abe's house was about a mile and a half northwest of the graveyard where he and his granddaughter, Hattie, were buried. I am going to get Mr. Mayhew to take your letter home with him and have him write to me as soon as he can get the additional information you desire. . . .

Sincerely your cousin,

C. L. Kagey.

Charles L. Kagey (1876-1941) was a prominent lawyer and jurist of Kansas. President Harding appointed him U.S. Minister to Finland. Charles, a native of Shenandoah County, Virginia, born on the old Kagey homestead near Rude's Hill, was a son of John Henry Kagey, a first-cousin to John Henri. John Henry's father was Henry, a brother to "California Abe" and my grandfather, Jacob.


HARPER'S FERRY IN 1859
Wagon Road along the foot of Maryland Heights
B. & O. R. R.
POTOMAC RIVER
Wide, rocky bed
High cliffs
steep, high bank
U. S. Canal
C. & O. Canal
Washington Street
High elevation
U. S. Musket Factory and Arsenal
Engine House
Railroad and Wagon Bridge
Steep Ascent High Street
High, rocky cliffs all along here
Shenandoah Street
Canal
River Flats
Rifle Factory
Winchester & Potomac R. R.
Wagon Bridge
Loudoun Heights
SHENANDOAH RIVER
Wide, rocky bed
Scale in Tenths of a Mile:
0
1/10
2/10
3/10
4/10
5/10
6/10

CHAPTER XIX

Conclusion

Having now presented in the foregoing pages about all the information I have concerning John Henri Kagi, his immediate family, and his relations with John Brown, it does not seem necessary to say much more. As stated at the outset, my purpose has been to give information, not to adduce arguments or set forth opinions. Different persons have had different opinions about John Brown, and these differences, no doubt, are still very sharp. It is to be expected that opinions will differ in equal measure, or almost equal measure, about John Henri Kagi. It is probably true that more people abhor slavery now than opposed it in 1859 and that a large majority in most parts of the country are glad that slavery was abolished many years ago, but not a great number, I imagine, will say that the plan of Brown and Kagi for abolition was feasible or the methods they undertook were commendable. This is not saying that they were not firm in their convictions of right and wrong or that they were not sincere in their crusade against what they believed to be a great evil.

There can hardly be any question that the Harper's Ferry raid, even more than the conflict of parties in Kansas, stirred up antagonism between sections and parties and had much to do with bringing on the Civil War of 1861-65. One of the great results of this terrible war was the breaking of the shackles of Negro slavery. If Brown, Kagi, and others who died in the raid at Harper's Ferry and because of it could have seen this result, and could have known how much their rash act that October night had to do with it, they probably would have felt justified and amply rewarded.

The year 1959, the centenary of the John Brown raid, brought great numbers of people, earnest students and casual

sightseers, to Harper's Ferry, and also stimulated a widespread revival of interest in books and all sources of information relating to Brown and his followers, and to places with which they were associated—New York, Kansas, Canada, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, as well as Harper's Ferry.

The Civil War centenary, now being celebrated, will also attract much attention to Harper's Ferry, which was the scene of several military actions of unusual interest and importance. In connection with its wealth of history, the place has long been celebrated for its natural scenery. Nature marked it out for admiration and adventure. The rivers and the mountains join in presenting a stage set for stirring drama, and thereon, in the midst of beauty and grandeur, the players have made their entrances and exits.

The new is hopefully awaited, the old is not forgotten.

INDEX

INDEX

"Abraham Lincoln and Men of War-Times", 105
Adams House, Chicago, 70
Ages of Brown's men, 69
Akron, Ohio, 16, 73, 88
Albany, N. Y., 34
Allen, John J., 2, 39
"All over the state", 37
Americana, 1
American Fur Co., 46
American Historical Publishing Co., 1
Anderson, Jeremiah G., 87, 88, 104, 105
Anderson, Osborne P., 105
Anderson, William P., 71
Anderson County, Kans., 81
Anti-slavery settlement, 66
Archives of the Kansas State Historical Society 52, 53, 58, 78. 82, 101
Armory and Arsenal, 100, 103, 104
Armstrong, John, 64, 65
"Art of war" at Springdale, 66-69
Ashtabula, Ohio, 16, 73-75, 80
Atchison, Kans., 83
Attack on Harper's Ferry, 103, 104
Auction in Cleveland, Ohio, 87
Augusta County, Va., 11
"Aunt Barbara", 43, 45
Avis, Dr. James L., 4, 109, 110
Avis, Capt. John, 4, 109, 110
Avis, Lieut., 111
Bail of $8000, 57
Baltimore, Md., 34
B. & O. Railroad, 23, 44, 86, 103
  Winchester branch, 103
Barne, A. S. & Co., 26
Barney, Nebr., 44, 116, 121
Barry, Joseph, 113, 114
Barry, Louise, 5, 43, 47, 74, 101
Bartling, Edward D., 46, 49, 81, 83, 84, 115, 116, 120
Batcheller & Wallbaum, 121
"Battle of the Spurs", 81, 88
Bay of Chagres, 25
Bear chased, 47
Beckham, Mayor Fontaine, 105
Bedford, Pa., 97, 99
Bell, James, 73
"Big Muddy", 45
"Biographies of the Presidents", 43, 45
Bishop, Adam, 79
Black Jack, Kans., 53, 56
Black Jack fight, 53
Blacksmiths, 11, 26, 28, 79, 120, 124
Blanchard, Dr. I. D., 64
Bloomfield, Ohio, 16, 18, 30
Boerly, Thomas, 105
"Book agent", 100
Boston, Mass, 123, 124
Boston merchant, 48
Bourbon County, Kans., 80
Bradway, Mrs. Barbara, 3, 66, 116, 118, 123
Bradway, Frank, 119, 122
Bradway children, 118
Bridgewater, Va., 8, 36, 124
Bristolville, Ohio, 14, 16, 18, 23, 24, 45, 75, 89, 91
Brooks, Preston S., 63
Brown, Frederick, 53
Brown, Jason, 73, 88
Brown, John, 1, 38, 39, 49
  At Pottawatomie massacre, 53
  at Springdale, Iowa, 66, 67
  in the East, 69
  In Canada, 71, 73
  in New England, 73, 75
  final operations in Kansas, 76-85
  rescues Jim Daniels and others, 81
  denounced at Tabor, Iowa, 84
  speech in Grinnell, Iowa, 84
  speech in Cleveland, Ohio, 87, 88
  at North Elba, N. Y., 88
  his rifle and pistol, 110, 111
Brown, John, Jr., 88
Brown, Oliver, 53, 105
Brown, Owen, 52, 67-69, 73, 78, 87, 105
Brown, Salmon, 53
Brown, Watson, 100, 104, 105
Buffalo, N. Y., 34, 74, 75
"Bully Brooks" bludgeon, 62, 63
Burke, Miss, 124
Burketown, Va., 12
Bushong, Millard K., 100, 103
Butler, Senator, 63
"California Abe", 8, 9, 11, 39, 46, 116, 117, 125
California gold fields, 3
Campbell, John, 76
Camp Creek, Nebr., 3, 9, 44, 49, 65, 66, 116, 118, 122
Camp Creek Cemetery, 123
Cape Horn, 9, 28
"Captain John Brown and Harper's Ferry" 92, 103, 105, 113
Card of February 2, 1857, 62
Carpenter, 120
Case in court breaks down, 88, 89
Cavalryman, C. S. A., 39

Cave for vegetables, 115
Cedar County, Iowa, 68
Centenary of the Civil War, 128
Chambersburg, Pa., 4, 35, 93-101
Change in Brown's plans suggested, 109
Chapin's Hall, Cleveland, Ohio, 87
Charles Town, W. Va., 4, 100, 103, 105, 106, 109, 110
Charlie, "dear friend", 73, 74
Charlottesville, Va., 8
Chatham, Canada, 65, 71, 72
Chatham Convention, 48, 65, 71, 73
Chicago, Ill., 52, 67, 70
Chinaman killed, 27
Christian names of Kageys, 9, 10
Cincinnati, Ohio, 43-45
Civil Bend, Nebr., 64, 65
"Civil War rages" (in Kansas), 52-54
Civil War, 1861-65, 39, 80, 127
Clark, Rev. John L., 97
Clay County, Nebr., 119
Cleveland, Ohio, 52, 71, 73, 87
Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, 64, 77-82
Color line drawn, 70
Colpetzer, William, 76
Company B, 52
Compromise of 1850, 29
Confederates Republicans, 39
Conneaut, Ohio, 88
Connecticut Reserve, 16, 18
Connelley, William E., 64
Conrad, George, 97
Conrad, Martha Clementina, 97
Conrad, Susan, 97
Convention in Canada, 48, 65, 71, 73
Convention in Kentucky, 29
Conventions, pro-slavery, 57, 59
Cook, John E., 66, 67, 69, 103-105
  at Harper's Ferry, 73, 87, 99, 100
  his written statement, 91, 100
Cook, Lawson, 122
Cook, Mrs. Virginia, 99, 100
Copeland, John A., 104, 105
Coppoc, Barclay, 87, 105
Coppoc, Edwin, 87, 104, 105
Cornishman in Nebraska, 122
Coyotesville, Calif., 27, 47
Craig, Holt County, Mo., 121, 122
Crawford, George A., 80
"Crime against Kansas", 63
Cross Roads, Va., 12
Cruise, Mr., killed, 81
Cumberland, Md., 13
Dana, Mr., of *The Tribune*, 101
Daniels, Jim, 81
Davenport, Iowa, 69
Davis, Hattie A., 119, 123, 124
Davis, John O., 65, 117-119, 121, 123
Davis, Mrs. John O., 117, 121, 123
Davis, Lizzie, 119
Deacon Creek, Ohio, 30
Delany, Dr. Martin R., 48
Denny, Hattie Davis, 124, 125
Denny, Ollie, 124
Deseret, Utah, 115, 116
Deseret News, 115
Des Moines, Iowa, 84
Detroit, Mich., 70, 71, 75, 81, 85, 87
Diary of Dr. Thomas Flint, 25
Douglass, Frederick, 87, 96
Dulany, Martin R., 71
Edinburg, Va., 12, 37
Edwards County, Kans., 66, 117, 123, 124
Eleven to Windsor, Canada, 81
Elmore, Judge, encounter with, 57, 59, 60, 62
Engine house at Harper's Ferry, 104, 105, 108-110
English language criticized, 31, 32
Erie Canal, 34
Essay on phonography, 31, 32
Evening Post, N. Y., 52
Falls City, Nebr., 64
Fancy penmanship, 40, 41
Fansler, Anna, 14
Fanslers, The 31, 35, 48
Finland, Minister to 6, 8, 125
Flint, Dr. Thomas, 25
Flowers in California, 25, 26
Foltz, Isaac, 43
Foltz, Margaret, 43, 45
Fonsler, 47, 48
Forbes, Col. Hugh, 68
Fort against Indians, 8, 9
Fort Kearney, Nebr., 46
Fort Scott incident, 80, 81
Fort Snyder, Kans., 79
Franklin County, Pa., 93
Free-soilers, 29, 30, 37, 45, 48, 52
Free-State Volunteers, 52, 55
"Friend Adda", 74, 75
"Friend Charlie", 73, 74
"Friend Phillips", 82-84
"Friends of Freedom", 93, 94
Fugitive slaves 30, 64, 65, 71
Fuller, Dr., 105
Garvey House, Topeka, 56
Geary, Governor, 53, 54
"General Tubman," 71
Germans from Pennsylvania, 39
Gill, George B., 22, 67, 69, 70, 73, 78-80, 82, 84
Gilpatrick, Dr., 81
"Glorious Victory", 30
Gold field prices, 27
Gold Pen lost, 41, 42
Good, Dr. Eugene, 124

Governor of Connecticut, 18
Graveyard in Kansas, 124, 125
in Nebraska, 123
in Virginia, 8
"Great Commoner, The", 99
Greeley, Kans., 81
Green, Shields, 105
Grinnell, Iowa, 84
Gunsmith from Maine, 103
Hagerstown, Md., 91, 93
Hairgrove, Asa, 76
Hairgrove, William, 76, 78, 79
Hall, Amos, 76
Hall, Austin, 76
Hall, John H., 103
Hall's rifle factory, 41, 103, 104
Halltown, W. Va., 103, 104, 106
Hamilton brothers, 76, 77
Hamilton, Capt., Charles, 76
Hamilton massacre, 76-78
Hamilton, Ontario, 71, 72
Hammon, Aaron, 30
Hammon, H. B., 30, 31
Hammons in Virginia, 31
Hanging in Harrisonburg, 12
Harding, President, 6, 8, 125
Harper's Ferry, 4, 23, 44, 78, 93, 106, 126, 128
in 1859, 86
about 1900, 90
raid at 4, 39, 103-114
Harrisonburg, Va., 4, 7, 12, 97, 109
Harvest hand, 7, 12, 19, 21, 34, 35
Hawkinstown, Va., 2, 12, 37
Hawkinstown school, 37, 38, 41, 45
Hazlett, Albert, 87, 104, 105
"Hellen" Parsons?, 74, 75
Hicklan, slave owner, 81
Highway No. 11, 11
Hinton, R. J., 22, 29, 35, 48, 52, 54, 63, 77, 84, 87, 99, 105-113
Historical park, 49
Historical Society of Southern California, 25
History of Jefferson County, Va., and W. Va., 100, 103
Holden, Isaac, 71
Holt County, Mo., 121
Holton, Kans., 56, 64
Horses and mules sold 87
Howard, Mr., 30
Hunter and trapper, 9
Ice in the river, 64, 65
Indian fort, 8, 9
Indian Road, 11
Indians and Mexicans, 109, 110
Ingersoll, Ontario, 71, 72
Introduction resented, 41
Iowa City, Iowa, 66, 67
Irishman brings news, 109
Isaac Smith & Sons, 99
Isthmus of Panama, 25, 28, 124
Jackson, Gen. T. J., 9
Jailer at Charles Town, 109, 110
Jefferson County, Va., and W. Va., 4, 41, 109
Jefferson County History, 100, 103
Jefferson County marriages, 100
Jim, slave of Dr. Fuller, 105
Joel in Nebraska, 39, 118
"John Brown and His Men", 22, 29-35, 48
John Brown's Fort, Kans., 79
"John Brown's Fort", Harper's Ferry, 108, 112
"John Brown's Secretary of War", 1, 73, 113
Jones, sheriff, 52, 53
Judge of election, 120
Kagey, Abraham, 7, 8
Kagey, Abraham N., 1, 3, 6, 8, 117
to Ohio, 8, 9, 11, 13
marries Anna Fansler, 14
to California, 9, 19
to Nebraska, 9, 46, 49
buys lots in Nebraska City, 116
last visit to Virginia, 123, 124
dies in Kansas, 66, 123-125
Kagey, Abraham J., 20, 21, 34, 97, 99, 123
Kagey, Abraham, son of David, 28
Kagey, Anna M., 14, 15, 26, 28, 34, 111
her diary, 3, 9
marries J. W. Wayland, 34
Kagey, Barbara, 119
Kagey, Barbara A., 3, 14, 15, 115, 123
marries Allen B. Mayhew, 22
marries Mr. Bradway, 116
moves to Camp Creek, 118
Kagey, Barbara (Neff), 8, 43, 45
Kagey, Hon. Chas. L., 6, 8, 28, 123, 125
Minister to Finland, 6, 8, 125
letter from Wichita, 5, 123-125
Kagey, David N., 6, 8, 10, 11, 26, 37
Kagey, Elizabeth, 41, 43, 46
Kagey, Henry, 7
Kagey, Henry N., 6, 8
Kagey, Isaac B., 11, 12
Kagey, Isaac N., 26, 28
Kagey, Jacob N., 2, 3, 8, 9, 19, 20
Kagey, Joel F., 4, 34, 38, 39, 41, 118
Kagey, John Henry, 6, 8, 125
Kagey, John R., 7
Kagey, John William, 10
Kagey, Mary, 3, 14, 15, 123
in Virginia, 34, 38, 43, 46, 48, 49
to Nebraska, 49, 66, 117
marries John O. Davis, 117

Kagey homes, 2, 3, 6, 8, 99
Kagey name—spelling, 1, 5
Kageys and Neffs described, 35
Kagi, John Henri, 1, 3-8, 14-18, 24, 49, 70, 75, 78-80
in Virginia, 3, 4, 19-23, 29, 34-42
a teacher, 17, 21, 29, 37, 38, 47, 48
a free-thinker, 18, 21, 22
a vegetarian, 21, 115
at Harper's Ferry, 23, 34, 103-114
studies law, 29, 48
newspaper reporter, 30, 48, 51, 52, 54, 55, 59, 62, 89
on the English language, 31-33
to Nebraska, 41-44, 46-50
letter from Nebraska City, 46, 47
meets James H. Lane, 39, 48
his "likeness" 50, 61, 91
in Kansas, 51-58, 65-70
in prison, 52, 54-57
associate editor, 55
wounded, 59, 80
joins John Brown, 65
at Mayhew's, 66, 67, 83, 84
at Springdale, Iowa, 67-69
in Canada, 71, 73, 74
letter to "Friend Charlie", 73, 74
letter to "Friend Adda", 74, 75
letter to "Friend Phillips", 82-84
final operations in Kansas, 76-85
narrow escape, 82-84
speech in Grinnell, Iowa, 84
motives in going to Kansas, 85
speech in Cleveland, Ohio, 87, 88
in northern Ohio again, 87-92
collecting arms, 79, 88, 99
his romance wrecked, 89
in Chambersburg, 93-101
his alleged correspondence, 97, 99
his last letter? 100, 101
sent to the rifle factory, 104
killed in the Shenandoah River, 104, 109, 114
Kagy, Abraham, 83
Kagy, Hans, 83
Kagy, Henry, 83
Kagy, Jacob, 83
Kagy, Rudolph, 83
"Kagy Relationship in America", 4, 17, 35, 63, 113
Kansas-Nebraska Bill, 37, 48, 78
Kansas State Historical Society, 5, 19, 30, 34, 52, 57, 60, 73, 77-79, 82, 107
Kansas Tribune, 5, 51, 52, 54, 57, 59, 62, 73
Keagy, Abraham, 83
Keagy, Franklin, 35, 48, 52, 55, 63, 89
family historian, 4, 17, 83
at Mrs. Rittner's, 93-96
Keagy, James, 96, 97
Keagy, Jane, 97
Keagy, John, 97
Keagy, Rudolph, 83
Keagys, photographers, 95-97
Kearney, Old Fort, 46
Kennedy, boarding house, 100
Kennedy Farm, 4, 93, 98, 102, 103, 106
Kennedy, Mary V., 100
Kennedy, Widow, 100
"Kent", signature, 52
Kinsman, Ohio, 18
Kinsman Academy, 18
Knoxville, Iowa, 45
Kossuth, Louis, 73
Lady friend of J. H. Kagi, 61, 89, 91
Lake Erie, 11, 14, 16, 18, 91
Lancaster County, Pa., 7
"Land of Steady Habits", 16
Lane, James H., 39, 45, 52, 65, 85
life of by Stephenson, 48, 53, 85
"Lane's Chimneys", 45
"Lane's Political Career", 45
Lane's Trail, 45, 48, 64-66
Lane, village, 53, 56
Lawrence, Kans., 48, 51, 53, 56, 65, 77-79
threatened, 53
Leader, The, Cleveland, 52, 87, 89
Leary, Lewis S., 105
Lebanon, Ohio, 73
Lecompte, Judge, 57
Lecompton, Kans., 52, 54, 56, 57
"Legislature", 55
Lee, Col. Rebert E., 104, 105, 110
Leeman, Wm. H., 67, 69, 73, 78, 79, 87, 89, 105
Lees, Mr., 116
"Legislature", at Lecompton, 55
"Legislature" dispersed, 52
Lenhart, Charles W., 73
Letter of 1848, 14
of 1853, from Ohio, 30
of 1853, from California, 3, 25-28
of 1855, 46, 47
of 1872, 118, 119
of 1873, 119, 120
of 1941, 123-125
Letters exchanged, 28, 49, 50
Letters of 1909, 21, 38, 39
Lewistown, Pa., 19, 22, 23
Library of Congress, 51, 54
Lincoln, President, 21
Lindenville, Ohio, 74, 75, 89
Linn County, Kans., 76, 78, 79
Linn County massacre, 76-78, 87
Lititz, Pa., 1
Little, John, killed, 80, 81

"Liz" forgiven, 46
Loco-Foco, 30
Locust Vale, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 22, 36
Los Angeles, Calif., 25
Loudoun County, Va., 41
Loudoun Heights, 41, 104
Macksville, Kans., 124
Manassas, 2d battle, 9
Mapleton, Kans., 80
Marais de Cygnes massacre, 56, 76-78
Martinsburg, W. Va., 113
Massanutten Mountain, 7
Massasoit House, Chicago, 70
"Maurice Maitland", signature, 69
Maxon, William, 67, 68
Mayhew, Allen B., 3, 115, 124
  marries Barbara Kagey, 22
  promotes Nebraska City, 46, 116
Mayhew, Mrs. Barbara, 26, 28, 37, 66
  administratrix, 116
Mayhew, Edward, 118, 119, 125
Mayhew, Hon. John H., 123-125
Mayhew cabin, 46, 49
Mayhew children, 118, 124
McClure, A. K., 105
McDonald, Dr. Henry T., 4, 93
McDonald, Mrs. H. T., 93
McDonald, Frank, 93
McDonnell, Mr. and Mrs. Lester R., 24, 32
McFarland, Helen M., 4, 60, 62
McVowr, in prison, 54
Mechem, Kirke, 5
Meem's Bottom, 2, 12
Merchant of Boston, 48
Merriam, Francis P., 105
Metcalf, merchant? 47
Methodist Church, 18, 36, 120
Mexicans and Indians, 109, 110
Mexican War veteran, 110
Mifflin County, Pa., 19
Mikel, John, 79
Miller, Mrs. Bettie, 21, 22, 35, 41
Miller, Mary, 11
Mills, Mr., 64
Minister to Finland, 6, 8, 125
Mississippi River, 45
Missouri, a base of pro-slavery, 37, 45
Missouri River, 116, 121
Moffett, Charles W., 67, 69, 73
Moneka, Kans., 56, 78, 79
Money spent in abolition cause, 77
Montgomery, Col., James, 77-80
Moody, Hon. Joel, 78, 79
"Morgan, Shubel", 77-79
Morse, Mrs. O. E., 78
"Moses of her people", 71
Mound City, Kans., 56, 78, 79
Mt. Jackson, Va., 2, 3, 12
Munroe, Rev. Wm. C., 71
Murders frequent, 26
Museum and park, 49
Mysterious strangers, 111
National armory established, 103
National Era, The, 52
National Road, The, 13
Nebraska City, 3, 4, 28, 37, 44-46, 64, 115, 118
Neff, Anna, 7, 8
Neff, Barbara, 8, 9
Neff, Eld. Benj. W., 9
Neff, Francis, 8
Neff, Dr. Jacob, 7
Neff, Jackson, 29
Neff, John, 8
Neff, Eld. John, 8, 9
Neff, Col. John Francis, 2, 9
Neff, Dr. John Henry (1), 7, 8, 12
Neff, Dr. John Henry (2), 7
Neff, Dr. John Henry (3), 8
Neffs and Kageys described, 35
Neff-Kagey graveyard, 8
Negroes in Canada, 71
Negro regiment, 80
Nemaha City, Nebr., 64
Nevada City, Calif., 25-27, 47
Newby, Dangerfield, 105, 110
New Market, Va., 2, 6, 7, 12, 22, 124
New Orleans, La., 47
Newspapers exchanged, 50
New York City, 1, 19, 25, 26, 34, 52
Niagara Falls, 74, 75
Night meetings at Grinnell, 84
"Nollichucky Jack", 12
North Bristol, Ohio, 18
North Elba, N. Y., 88, 113
Northern men at Harper's Ferry, 110
"Not going to Ohio", 64
Oberlin, Ohio, 88
Ohio River, 13, 18, 45
Old home sold, 26, 28
"Old Log Cabin Home" 46, 49, 81, 115, 120
"Old Zac", 15
"Omnibus Bill", 29
"One of John Brown's Men", 1, 21
Orwell, Ohio, 14, 16
Osage River, Kansas, 56, 76
Osawatomie, Kans., 53, 56, 77, 78
  captured, 53
Osceola, Iowa, 45
Otoe County, Nebr., 3, 116
Page County, Va., 7
Paine, Thomas, 18
Parsons, Luke F., 67, 69, 70, 73-75
Parsons home, 70, 74
Partridge, William, 79

Penmanship, fancy, 3, 40, 41
Pennsylvania-German, The, 1
Pennsylvania Railroad, 23
Peru, Nebr., 44, 64, 116
Philadelphia, Pa., 34, 51, 52
Phillips, Mr., of Lawrence, 101
Phillips, Col. W. A., 82, 107
Phonography, 29, 31, 37, 47, 48
Photographers in Chambersburg, 95-97
Pierce, President, 61
Pittsburgh, Pa., 23
Polish gentleman, 73
Posen, Prussia, 73
Posse from Missouri, 81
Pottawatomie Creek, 52
  massacre, 53
Pottinghill, merchant? 47
Powhattan, Kans., 64
Prairie chickens plentiful, 47
Prairie winds, 47
Presents by mail, 43, 45
Price, alleged fugitive slave, 88, 89
Prices in 1848, 15
  in 1853, 27
  in 1873, 120
Printing presses destroyed, 53
Pro-slavery men killed, 53
"Provisional Constitution", 71, 73
Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society, 53, 85
Quaker settlement, 66
Quincy, Iowa, 45
Quinn, Luke, 105
Realf, Richard, 66, 67, 69, 73
Reed, Rev. B. L., 76, 77
Regiment 2d, 52
Register, The, Des Moines, 84
Reno, Nevada, 28
Republican, The, Lawrence, 52
Rice, B. M., 80
Richardson, Richard, 67, 69
Richey in prison, 54
Rifle factory, 41, 103, 104, 109, 126
Rittner, Governor, 94, 99
Rittner, Mrs. Mary, 94-95, 99, 100, 101
Rittner home in Chambersburg, 94
Robbery at Tecumseh, 60-62
Robertson, William, 76
Rockingham County, Va., 8, 36
Rock Island, Ill., 69
Rocky Mountain bear, 47
Ross, Patrick, 76, 77
Rowe, Mrs. George C., 46, 49
Rude's Hill, Va., 1, 2, 6-9, 11-13, 125
Sacramento, Calif., 27
Safford, Jacob, 51
Salmon River, 116
Saloon attacked, 18
Salt Lake City, Utah, 115, 116, 119, 124
Sandusky, Ohio, 71, 72
Sandy Hook, Md., 99
San Francisco, Calif., 25
Seaman, Ben, 80
Sea shells from Panama, 28, 124
Second Manassas battle, 9
"Secretary of War", 1, 73, 114
Sevier, Gen. John, 12
Sharp's rifles, 99, 110
Shawnee County, Kans., 60
Shenandoah County, Va., 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12
Shenandoah River, 7, 11, 35, 36, 90, 114
Shepherd, Heyward, killed, 104, 105
Shepherdstown, W. Va., 113
Shooting affray, 59
Shorthand reporter, 29
Sierra Nevada Mountains, 28
Slaves few in Shenandoah Valley, 39
Slavery opposed, 15, 16, 18, 37
Smith Creek, Va., 7, 12
Snyder, Asa, 79
Snyder, Charles, 76
Snyder, Eli., 79
Snyder, Elias J., 79
Snyder, E. W., 79
Snyder, John H., 79
Snyder, Simon, 79
Sodom, Ohio, 18
Solomon black, 21
Speeches at Grinnell, Iowa, 84
  in Cleveland, Ohio, 87
Spring Creek, Kans., 82
Springdale, Iowa, 65-69, 85
Stafford County, Kans., 123
Stage coach road, 12, 23, 44
Stage for drama, 128
Staunton, Va., 12
St. Catharines, Canada, 71-75, 91
Steamer *J. C. Fremont,* 43, 45
Stearn, George L.? 47, 48
"Stenographic Sound-Hand", 31
Stephenson, W. H., 48, 53, 85
Stevens, Aaron D., 52, 65-69, 73, 78, 79, 81, 89, 103-105
Stevens, Thaddeus, 99
Stevenson, Samuel, 79
Stiff curriculum, 38
Stillwell, Thomas, 76
St. Louis, Mo., 43, 45
Stonemason, 120
Stone quarry meeting, 96
Stoner, Barbara, 7
Stonewall Brigade, 9
Storer College, 112
Straight Creek, Kans., 82
"Strange Story of Harper's Ferry", 113
Strasburg, Va., 12

Stuart, Lt. J. E. B., 105
Stutler, Boyd B., 92, 103, 105, 113
"Sugar hogsheads", 47
Sumner, Sen. Charles, 63
Sumner, Col. E. V., 52
Surveyor, 120
"Swimming the Potomac", 39
Switzerland, 7, 83
Sword practice, 68
Tabor, Iowa, 44, 64
Tanner, A. H., 80
Taylor, Stewart, 69, 73, 87, 104, 105
Taylor, Pres. Zachary, 15
Tecumseh, Kans., 55, 56, 59, 60
Teesdale, Editor, 84
Texas, 15
Thompson, Dauphin, 104, 105
Thompson, Henry, 53
Thompson, William, 105
Thompsons, 47, 48
Tidd, Charles P., 67, 70, 73, 78, 79, 103, 105
Titus, Colonel, 55
Topeka, Kans., 5, 34, 51
Townsley, James, 53
Trading Post, Kans., 56, 76, 78
"Tramp" at Woodlawn, 111
Trenton, N. J., 34
Tribune, The (Chicago), 52
Tribune, The (New York), 52, 89
Tribune (Topeka), threatened, 60
Trick resented, 41, 46
Trumbull, Jonathan, 18
Trumbull County, Ohio, 1 11-13, 16, 80, 89
Trump of Fame (Warren, O.,), 18
Tubman, Harriet, 71
Turner, G. W., 105, 110
"Underground Railroad", 37, 64, 71, 99, 115
"Up on the River", 35, 36, 38, 41
U. S. Marines, 105
U. Va. Hospital, 8
Va. Inf., 33d Regt., 9
Valley Pike, 2 11-13, 23
"Vegetarian Society", 115
Voltaire, 18
Walker, Mr., 111
Warren, Ohio, 14, 16, 18
Washington, Col. Lewis W., 104, 105, 110
Washington, Col. Richard B., 110
Washington County, Md., 93
Washington, D. C., 52
Washington Territory, 115
Watson, Henry, 99
Wattles, Augustus, 78, 79, 81
Wayland, John Wesley, 34
Weiner, Theodore, 53
West Andover, Ohio, 88, 89
Western Reserve, 16, 18
Western Reserve Celebration Committee, 36
Western Reserve Chronicle, 18
West Liberty, Iowa, 69
Wheeling, W. Va., 13, 16, 23, 43, 45
Whipple, Colonel, 52, 65, 73
Wichita, Kans., 5, 123
Wiener, L., 79
Williams, watchman, 103, 104
Winchester, Va., 12, 13, 23, 34, 43, 44
Windsor, Canada, 81, 85
Winter war avoided, 57
Wolf scalps, 9
Wolves in Nebraska, 47
Wood, Marshal J. P., 82
Woodlawn, Va., 2, 3, 20, 22
Woodstock, Va., 9, 12
World's Fair, Chicago, 108
Wyuka Cemetery, Nebr., 46
Yellow fever, 124
Young men with Brown, 91, 92
Youngstown, Ohio, 24, 32
Zero at daylight, 47